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THE PAKISTANI HISTORIAN

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TO

THE SWEET MEMORIES OF

MAMA ABDUL MAJID

AND

MAMI IQBAL BEGUM (BALI)

WHO WERE, TILL THEIR DEATH AND FROM THE
EARLIEST STIRRINGS OF MY CONSCIOUSNESS,
MY SECOND PARENTS;

WHO GAVE ME SO MUCH OF THEMSELVES THAT
TODAY THE ECHOES OF THE REMOTE YESTERDAYS
SPENT WITH THEM REVERBERATE
AND MAKE MUSIC IN THE MIND;

WHO LEFT THE WORLD RICHER
BY PASSING THROUGH IT;

WHO, BY LOVING ME BEYOND ALL DESERVING,
GAVE ME UNCONFINED JOY;

WHO MADE SUCH MAGIC IN MY LIFE THAT TOO
SWIFTLY ROLLED THE WHEEL OF TIME;

AND WHOSE PASSING AWAY I MOURNED AND YET
SHALL MOURN WITH EACH RETURNING SEASON.

MAY THE EARTH REST LIGHTLY ON THEM.

[In Punjabi *mama* is one's mother's brother
and *mami* his wife.]

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PREFACE

This book is the child of a series of rough and vexing experiences which left me in a fret.

In my earliest years of lecturing at the Government College, Lahore, I found myself unable to recommend to my students any books on the making of Pakistan. I attributed this inability to my ignorance and rocked my conscience to sleep. When I began my doctoral research at the University of Manchester, and chose as my subject a study of British public opinion *vis a vis* the development of Muslim nationalism in India in the years 1857-1947, my supervisors, who were political scientists not Indian historians, asked me for a reading list of about twenty titles the perusal of which would give them a clear idea of Muslim political thinking. I found the task impossible. The final list I produced did not contain a single Muslim author. A little later, when I was on the staff of the University of London, I confronted the same difficulty in answering the bibliographical inquiries of my students and colleagues and in compiling the background reading material which had to be circulated in advance of the seminars I was giving.

This was in the 1950s, and I found a convenient explanation in that the emergence of Pakistan was too recent an event to have attracted its historians. But I was myself not persuaded of the soundness of the excuse I was offering (the flow of books from India had started by this time). My audience was more polite than truthful, which added to my humiliation.

At the University of Khartoum I taught for several years a graduate course on the religion, politics and society of the non-Arab Islamic world. The time now was the late 1960s, and the pretext of a new country with more pressing priorities than writing its own history was not acceptable even to my African-Arab students who were less informed on India and Pakistan than the British members of my seminars in London. Year after year I lectured, to a mature group, on a fairly sophisticated level, with a very inadequate reading list on Pakistan, a defect thrown into relief by the ample bibliographies I gave them on Iran, Indonesia and India. Even Afghanistan had a longer section than Pakistan. My humiliation was turning into vexation.

The pain of frustration developed a sharper sting during my occasional lecturing, between 1969 and 1980, at some universities in Europe. On each occasion, as is the normal practice, at the post-lecture

tea or coffee gathering, I was asked about the available literature on the field, and my Ahs! and Ahems! and Ohs! of prevarication and evasion drew the inquiries, at times sharp and persistent: why has Jinnah not yet been written about? Why does Iqbal still lack a biographer? When shall we have a history of the All India Muslim league? and so on. I was an invited guest and the European academic community was courteous. But I sat on thorns.

On one occasion I was rendered speechless when, after my 90-minute lecture on the glory of Mughal India, a gentleman walked over to me, introduced himself as the Turkish ambassador, complimented me on my presentation, showed keen interest in the Mughals who had been his kinsmen, and then asked me if I could suggest one or two general histories of the Mughal Empire written by Muslims. I said I couldn't, and as I said it I could see the pale flush of disbelief mounting in his face and the tide of excitement ebbing away. Then for five minutes he spoke on the incredibility of what I had told him, on the importance of recalling history, and on the work being done in Turkey on the Ottoman Empire. I stood there, silent and rooted to the ground, feeling like a criminal being sent to prison by a magistrate.

But I was fated to suffer a prolonged and continuous discomfiture of the same kind in the 1980s which made the humiliation and frustration fester into a galling bitterness. Between 1982 and 1987 I spent 3 years at the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg, lecturing on the history and religious movements of modern Muslim India (and also on the fundamentals of Islam and on modern *islah* movements in the Muslim world). Again and again, my students asked for material for further reading, documents, original sources, standard studies and general bibliographies. At the beginning of each semester I had to find excuses for the paucity of scholarly literature. But no amount of ingenuity on my part could explain to them the failure of the Pakistani historians.

I invited more self-abasement by agreeing to give two general lectures before the students and the staff of the Institute on the 1971 break-up of Pakistan. The talks went well, because I was in possession of a great deal of little-known but authentic information and because I spoke like a scholar not like a Bengali-baiting, ignorant and bigoted West Pakistani of 1970-71. The trouble came during the question-answer time when several persons among the audience referred to or quoted from Indian publications and, hearing my disavowals, asked about the books putting forth the Pakistani point of view. There was absolutely nothing that I could suggest; and I did not want to incur

more odium by naming the White Paper issued by the Yahya Khan regime or a few Urdu books and digests which were models of fanciful history and warped fact-finding. The assembly did not believe that the country's contemporary historians could have ignored a tragedy of this magnitude unless there were specific and clear reasons for the silence. I could not give them any reasons. Then somebody mentioned Kashmir, and that started the whole debate over again. There were about one hundred Indian books on the Kashmir problem, at least a quarter of them scholarly and documented. Could I name five Pakistani publications to match them? I could not. Suddenly an Indian Hindu flung at me the cutting words: "We have several Muslim historians in India; and some of them are good". He had made his point. My mortification was complete.

Since my final return to Pakistan in 1987 I have exchanged notes with some scholars, teachers and friends, talked to a number of students of varying age groups and addressed a few undergraduate and graduate gatherings. I have also spoken to a good number of educated Pakistani men and women about our national problems and their historical roots. Barring some students who showed interest, awareness and inquisitiveness, I found everybody too busy in pursuing his own self and chasing the goddess of fortune to have any time for history (or for that matter, any other academic or intellectual calling).

But much more than this, I have given unslumbering thought to the phenomenon of a totally inactive profession. If 5 or 6 historians write and publish in a country of 120 million people, there is something wrong both with the historians and with the people. Like governments, a people get the historians they deserve. To try to convert such people and such historians to a saner view of their responsibilities is like throwing sand against the wind.

What has happened to bring us to this pass, and why? In this book I have tried to seek some explanations of the massive failure. I have not attempted a study of the state of historical scholarship in the country. I hope some other investigator will do that, thus enlarging the scope of the inquiry and making us wiser.

This book was written in Abbotabad in April-June 1989 and revised in Lahore in November 1989-February 1990. The typescript was handed over to a Lahore publisher on 25 March 1990. Then I left for Cambridge, with a firm promise from the publisher that the book shall be out by the end of the year. After more than two years of false promises, and in spite of a legal agreement carrying an indemnity

clause, in July 1992 the typescript was returned to me with excuses which were worse than the promises. The book is now being brought out by Messrs. Vanguard Books, and for this I am grateful to my friend Mr. Najam Sethi.

The passage of two years had made no difference to my views or to the performance of the historians of Pakistan. I have therefore felt no need to make any changes in what I wrote originally.

My thanks are due to my wife for proof-reading, helping me in the making of the index, and other things done to make my life easy when I was writing these pages.

Lahore
16 August 1992 K.K. Aziz

INTRODUCTION

It was a man of God, Dean Inge, who said that to historians "is vouchsafed the power, denied to Almighty God, of altering the past". This makes them the most powerful species of mankind. If it is the purpose of history "to make us not clever for one day but wise forever" (Burchkhardt), it also makes them the most consummate teachers of mankind. Possession of power leads to the weight of responsibility. In plying their craft they should remember the awesome task they have taken upon themselves to perform.

All our yesterdays have built up our today; all our tomorrows will be what our today is. Thus the past, the present and the future merge, to shape our life. The historian records the past. He lives in the present. He understands, or should be able to understand, the future, which soon will be the present and a little later the past.

In all history Time unrolls his tapestry; the historian explains and interprets the designs of the fabric.

The uses of history are many and diverse. It is man's greatest love — love for the past. It rolls back the boundary of our mental horizon. It gives us the vision of old people, who only see well the things that are far off; it also gives us their capacity to recall, for they have so much more to remember. It fuses memory and understanding and hope. Memory is the bridge between our today and all our yesterdays. Understanding is the solid ground of today on which we stand. Hope is the bridge between our today and all our tomorrows. Memory is activated by our interest in the past. Understanding is impossible without a will to know the present. Hope is inspired by the imagination. Our most important faculties are thus put to work by history. We embrace the present without abandoning the past. We look ahead with longing while looking back with love.

The burdens of history are heavy and massive. The most circumspect among us may see the future through a gossamer veil of desire; others may let their fancy roam unhindered. Optimism is no sin, though too much of it may lead a people to disaster. But an uncritical vision of the past is a crime, and a recipe of catastrophe. In viewing the past the people must let the historian lead them. He alone can show them the field of history with all its landmarks intact: the tumult of events, the waves and weathers of time, the winds of change, the triumph of achievements, the gall and wormwood of reverses, the day of

gold and the years of tinsel, the proud victories and the humiliating defeats of life, the wheel of fortune on which nations ride up and down, the whirligig of time which we call change — in sum, the past as it was, not as it should have been.

The honest historian (the other kind does not deserve the title) will point out to his people all the sights of the arena of history, and thus bring their thought face to face with reality. He will show them the futility of toasting the past without learning from it. He will tell them that it is impossible to find God in history, for to do that is to hope that He, and not they, will take the blame for all that went wrong. He will warn them that to be deaf to the echoes of history is to condemn themselves to repeat all the mistakes and follies of the past. He will teach them to add hows and whys to the whats and whens of happenings.

Has the Pakistani historian performed this task? In the following pages I have made an attempt to answer the question.

CHAPTER 1

THE FOUNTAIN-HEAD: THE SEARCH FOR EVIDENCE

Documents and kindred sources of information are to history writing what brick and mortar are to the art of building. Without solid facts the historian will be telling a fairy tale instead of chronicling the past. Interpretation, perception, insight and philosophy come later: the simple narration of what happened comes first. Historical understanding emerges from historical knowledge. This knowledge is a grasp of the realities of the past — ancient or remote, medieval or modern.

Thus the first duty of the historian is to locate the facts, to seek the actualities, to look for the events and incidents and episodes which shaped the past. He is a person in search of his own (or someone else's) roots. This inquiry takes him to the causes and origins and elements of his existence, the prime movers of his evolution, the mainspring of his motion, the fount of his life, the regulator of the flood-tide of his fortunes. He will find the genesis in a mass of tangled roots — facts which overlap, affairs which coil, transactions which interlace, reports which contradict each other, eye-witnesses who lie and swear and exaggerate and fabricate and always protest their honesty, human prejudices and biases which are natural but which vitiate the reality and confuse the historian, chronicles which mix the real with the apparent, the fact with the desire and the absolute with the fortuity, personal accounts which furnish invaluable information but which have an axe to grind or a

point to make or a theory to propound or a message to give or an ideology to uphold or a faith to defend or a cause to advance, and so on.

The complexity of this evidence is best illustrated — as much for the professional historian as for the lay reader — by the source material at our disposal for the writing of a biography.

THE INDIVIDUAL IN HISTORY

Whether one prescribes or not to the theory that the great men make history and that other forces, tendencies, factors, occurrences, influences and what you will, take a second place, history cannot be studied or written without a thorough acquaintance with the character, habits, prejudices, convictions, commitments, thoughts and activities of the individuals who changed the fortunes of a country (or in some cases more than one country), the fate of a people, the destiny of a nation, or the future of a society. It has been said in humour that history is made up of chaps (persons), haps (events) and maps (geography). Whatever one's view of history, the "chaps" dominate the scene and deserve our attention.

Biography supplies a most interesting dimension of history. Few people read scholarly treatments even of their own country, some read a general history book, but many read biographies. The reason for this popularity is not far to seek. The common reader is more interested in people than in events. He wants to know how a great man became great, what he achieved, why he did certain things and why he did not do certain other things, who were his parents and teachers, where he was educated, by whom he was influenced, who were his friends and colleagues and critics and enemies, how he lived, whom he married, what were his habits, and so on. He grasps the events through the activities of the man. He understands a period through the achievements of the leader. He comprehends a movement through the persons who inspired, initiated and developed it.

There are not many learned men among the educated classes even in the advanced societies. Sophisticated scholarship is beyond the mental reach of the ordinary reader. In literate and educated societies the man in the library (the intellectual equivalent of the man in the street) reads two kinds of books: fiction and biography. The bulk of every public or general library in the West is made up of

these two sections. Thus, the majority of the common readers approach, or know, or gain an initiation into, or develop an interest in, their history by way of the biography. I have met several people in Europe who have rarely read a proper history book but have a thorough grasp of the history of their country through the reading of a large number of biographies. Some of them were so touched by the lives of the makers of their history that they advanced in their reading from biography to proper history.

A well-written biography combines in itself a three-fold attraction: it depicts the drama of the life of a man, it reads like a novel, and it teaches history through a painless, interesting and popular process. The dramatic element keeps the reader's attention riveted on what is happening. The easy and fluent style offers solid scholarship in an inviting form. The facts, environment and development of the subject's life present history in a most captivating way. There is much pleasure in mastering history through biographical studies.

Scholarly historians who are discouraged by a limited readership should turn their hand to biographical writing, but on the condition that they possess the requisite ability. Not all historians will have the skill to paint a man's career against the backcloth of an historical age. It requires a thorough knowledge of the forces — political, social, economic, intellectual — which moulded the period in which the subject of the biography lived, and also a deep insight into his character, motives, ideas, opinions and actions. The life and the times must fuse together to weave a seamless tapestry. The man should be perceived through the times he lived in, and the times should be understood through the achievements of the man. The maker and the events of history should march together, one influencing and shaping the other. The biography should cease gently (a good book never stops, for that means a jolt), as if the death of the man has rounded off a period of history, and the end of a life signals the end of an epoch. The life and the times die together.

In the poor state of historical scholarship in Pakistan one should not have expected many biographies of historical nature to flow from the presses, but for three considerations. In the first place, Muslim historiography has not only a long and rich tradition of *tazkira* (biographical dictionary) and *shajarat-ul-nasb* (geneological tree), but is itself a plant growing out of these two deep roots of

biographical approach. Arabic and Persian literature abounds in old-style biographical dictionaries and *sawanih* (life and times) and *hayat* (life). Urdu, which borrowed so much from Arabic and Persian, is not completely devoid of such literature, but all its *tazkiras* deal with men of letters, the great majority with poets. The historical biography does not exist in Urdu; Altaf Husain Hali's *Hayat-i-Javed* (a life of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan) being one of the few exceptions. A good deal is being written in Urdu on subjects cognate to history or common to literature and history, but the historical biography as such has not even been touched.

In the second place, a lot of biographical material fills the columns of Urdu magazines and daily newspapers. But all of it is either hagiography, or condemnation (political abuse), or valueless marginalia, or time-wasting ephemera, or downright ignorance. This column-writing is on the level of our Urdu press and therefore beneath the notice of the serious historian. Unfortunately, the English newspapers have not even tried to set a higher standard.

Finally, the wide range and high quality of *sirat* literature in all Muslim languages should have held out some hope that historical biography would receive scholarly attention (*sirat* = character, loosely life, biography; generally, though not exclusively, the life of the Prophet of Islam). The Prophet was a historical figure, and this early experience of writing the life of a man who existed in history should have, by all reasoning, developed into a tradition of historical biography. But it did not. A full discussion of the reasons for this failure will take me beyond the scope of this book, but one or two principal points ought to be mentioned briefly. The personality, status and role of the Prophet commanded, and command today, the highest possible veneration and esteem from all Muslim writers. In terms of pure scholarship, a biography of the Prophet, by its very nature, cannot be critical.

What seems to have happened is that this principle of piety applied to the writing of a life of the Prophet was widened to cover all biographical work. This extension of the application of a principle, which might have been justified in the solitary case of one person on purely religious grounds, marred all later attempts at biography writing by drawing a vague and tenuous line between biography and hagiography. There developed the practice of presenting every subject of a biography as a saint or a hero with super-human qualities. This attitude or habit evolved gradually but

consistently, from one step to another and from one generation to the next.

After the Prophet the *tazkira* author's attention was drawn to the companions of the Holy Messenger. Through their close association with the Prophet and the reports of their great piety and sacrifice, much veneration (to which the Prophet alone had once been entitled) came to be attached to their persons. Then came the first four *khalifas*, called the "righteous" by the Sunni majority of Islam. The prefix itself suffices to explain the historian's approach to their personalities and their age. (It is only in the last two or three decades that some Arab scholars have set out to reinterpret and examine critically their policies and decisions; but these attempts at a reassessment of the roles of the founding fathers of Islam have not yet influenced the Pakistani historians). Shia historians have, of course, their own version of the history of the first three *khalifas* and their hero worship of the fourth (Ali). But this debate between the Sunnis and the Shias is a part of their polemics, not of the history of early Islam (though polemics have the bad habit of dressing themselves up as history). The four *khalifas* were succeeded by the Umyyad kings, the Umayyads by the Abbasids, and for the next thirteen centuries the Islamic world was ruled by emperors, kings and princes. They were also the makers of the Islamic empire(s). Some of them saved Islam from its enemies at critical times. Several were great in their own right, several others missed the distinction by a narrow margin. Most lived as heroes in the Islamic tradition, and were treated accordingly by the historian. It is only in the last thirty or forty years that some of these monarchs have been subjected to modern critical scholarship in Turkey, Iran and India (but not in Pakistan).

Close to this secular pantheon of Islam (the caveat must be entered here that theoretically some of these rulers, especially the Ottomans, were also the *khalifas* of the Islamic world who combined in their royal person both religious supremacy and secular sovereignty) stood a long succession of religious and spiritual personages who tended the conscience and mind of the ordinary Muslim while the kings were protecting his body and life. From the early collectors and editors of *hadith*, to the founders of the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence and law, to the dozens of great commentators of the Quran, to the principal theologians, to the major philosophers, to the hundreds of saints, to the distinguished

Sufis, to the modern thinkers and interpreters, runs a succession of capacious intellects and eminent savants. This roll of honour is a dream for any biographer. Alas! it has remained a dream. Some men of letters and the mystics have been written upon (though not to a modern reader's satisfaction), but we still look in vain for dependable and scholarly lives of Saladdin, the Abdur Rahmans of Andalusia, Sulaiman the Magnificent, Walid, Murad, Shahjahan, and so many others. The smaller fry, smaller only in comparison with the very great — generals, admirals, chieftains, prime ministers, governors, chancellors, lords of the tribes, queens, princes, princesses — merely flit to and fro on the pages of history: tantalizing us, arousing without satisfying our couriosity, showing mere glimpses which entrance as much as they exasperate. All have been waiting for their biographers, some for long, long centuries.

Compared to both the Islamic lands and the Third World countries, Pakistan has a signally poor record of remembering the great men of her history. Even if we take into consideration the modern period alone we find a blank which it is difficult to explain by any rational argument. The debate about the "great man" theory notwithstanding, who dare deny that modern Muslim India was shaped and pushed towards unexpected historical turning points by Shah Waliullah, Sayyid Ahmad Barelawi, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Titu Mir, Sayyid Ameer Ali, the Aga Khan, Muhammad Ali Jauhar, Iqbal and Jinnah, to name only those who occupy the plateau of our modern historical panorama? Without them, perhaps without any single one of them, our past would have been poorer and our present not what it is. Some of them lack a biography of any kind, others have been victims of clumsy biographical treatment which has pushed the truth even farther into the realms of fancy, assumption, speculation and plain fabrication.

Nothing illustrates the Pakistani historians' failure in this field more convincingly than the absence of a single biography of Jinnah or Iqbal which meets the test of critical scholarship. A great deal has been written on Iqbal in Urdu and English, a well-staffed Iqbal Academy has been functioning for nearly forty years, a Majlis-i-Iqbal has been in existence for almost as long, and both have been publishing quarterly journals devoted to Iqbalian studies. But so far there is not a single readable, authentic and comprehensive life of Iqbal in any language. Nor has any historian attempted a documented, balanced and scholarly study of his role in politics.

Jinnah has fared better, but in foreign hands. The only two biographies in existence are those by Hector Bolitho (British) and Stanley Wolpert (American). The former was written on the orders of the Pakistan government and without the co-operation or approval of Miss Fatima Jinnah who was in possession of the Jinnah papers. Wolpert's study is a first-rate, independent and sympathetic work, rich in insight and understanding. But it was banned in Pakistan by General Zia's government; though a pirated Pakistani edition sold well for four years. The official action against the only valuable biography of the Father of the Nation produced only negative results: frustration and monetary loss for the publisher (Oxford University Press), chagrin and bitterness for the author (a respected historian), helpless rage for the educated Pakistanis who could not understand why they were not allowed to read the best available book on the founder of the country, and shame and humiliation for the Government which did not even try to justify its stupid decision.

The action against Wolpert's *Jinnah of Pakistan* must be viewed and construed as a veiled but dire warning to Pakistani historians that whatever they might write or plan to write about Jinnah (and by a logical extension about any other historical figure) shall have to meet the approval and sanction (preferably prior to publication) of the Government. Such censorship, unspelt out but draconian, makes nonsense of honest research.

There is another reason for the absence of biographical writing. A biography may or may not be formally equipped with a full critical apparatus, viz., references, footnotes, exact sources, etc., but to be credible it must be based on original sources and contemporary reports, and, if the subject's life has already been written by more than one author, on those earlier treatments. Hearsay, unreliable reports, collections of unverified stories are not the proper material with which to paint a faithful picture of a historical (or any) figure. The source material should also be extensive (ideally, comprehensive) so that there are no gaps in the author's information. A complete record of the life of the subject should be available to the writer.

Where will the biographer find this material? The essential sources are: diaries and journals left by the man under study; letters written by and to him; some information about his family background; record of his birth; details of his school, college and

university studies and professional training; collection of his speeches, interviews, statements and writings; itinerary of his journies, travels and movements; knowledge of his marriage, family life, children, neighbours, friends, supporters, sympathizers, critics, opponents, enemies and rivals; the state of his finances, income and property; a full record of his public activities and achievements; details of his old age, health or ailment, death and burial; a thorough grasp of the times he lived in and of the historical and political forces current in his age; and a close acquaintance with the lives, careers and roles of his contemporaries so that he can be compared with them and his achievements and failures placed in their proper context.

An industrious biographer will find time to seek as much of this material as is available. Some of it like family background and educational record might have been lost irretrievably, and he will learn how to do without it. He will scan all contemporary reports, which may be in newspapers or other men's memories or correspondence, and he will check them for reliability. But there are three sources without which he will find it impossible to write anything. In a descending order of intrinsic worth these are: diaries, letters, and collected works.

Before considering these principal sources, another source of much utility, but not always of very great value, should be considered briefly. If the subject of the biographer has written an autobiography or left his memoirs or reminiscences, many problems will be solved. At the least, the writer has now before him a straighforward, authoritative and first-hand account of the man's life. It supplies him, in many cases in full detail because autobiographers are garrulous and want to talk about themselves (a natural frailty), with authentic data about the subject's family, birth, early life, schooling and such other minor, but certainly not unimportant, things and events. But the autobiography has one universal failing against which the biographer must guard himself. It is the man's personal version of events, the way he himself sees, looking back, the unfolding of the thread of his life, an intensely personal view of things with his own emphases, stresses, failures of memory, intended nuances, unintended exaggerations and diminutions, necessary self-justifications and assertions, expected and unexpected denials, gentle or intemperate attacks on his opponents, relevant or irrelevant praise of his supporters, a host of innuendoes, left-handed compliments, sly and

derogatory remarks and half-truths, and sometimes (an uncommon phenomenon indeed) frank admissions of mistakes made, opportunities lost, friends betrayed, trust mislaid, principles ignored, agreements flouted, friendships broken, and other sins committed or nearly committed.

Every autobiography is made up of these ingredients mixed in varying proportions and weights. This is how it ought to be, for no man born of a woman can study his own self with that transparent honesty with which he thinks he can study other men. No cheers for the logic of the human mind! It is the biographer's task to examine the narration with the eyes of a hawk, to assess the arguments carefully, to collate the given explanations with other versions, to sift the relevant from the irrelevant, and to winnow out the chaff of falsehood from the grain of truth. If these precautions are taken, the autobiography can provide the author of the biography with much that he cannot find elsewhere, especially the actor's own constructions on how and why he followed a certain policy or made a particular decision or supported or opposed this or that party.

Even the most unreliable and self-glorifying account of a leader's own life can be useful to the biographer. The way the man asseverates his point of view, the arguments with which he justifies his stand, the outrageous accents in which he praises his actions and admires himself, the animus with which he reviles his rivals and critics — all this gives the biographer an insight into the mind of his subject and the ability to know and judge him. However careful the man may have been in putting across his side of the case, a meticulous and honest biographer will, by using the skills learnt from psychology, be able to study the motivation of his subject's thoughts and actions.

After this necessary digression, I come back to the three principal sources I mentioned above. Diaries and journals are of two kinds: those meant for subsequent publication and those not meant for publication at all. The first fall in the category of the autobiography: a deliberate, planned, conscious, contrived, reasoned attempt to defend and justify oneself at the bar of public opinion, to prepare one's case before the prosecution by History starts, to marshal all the arguments before Time begins its inquiry. The biographer will use such diaries with the same care and circumspection which he employed in utilizing the matter contained in the autobiography. However, they have one inestimable advantage

over the autobiography: they furnish exact dates on which the man expressed an opinion or speculation, or decided to take a certain step, or met a certain leader, or an important idea occurred to him. This specification of time may be of crucial significance in studying certain periods, short or long, of his life, and to that extent it will be of much help to the biographer.

Lucky is the historian who has laid his hands on an unpublished diary which was not meant for publication. This is a truly unique source of information which puts the biographer on the wide open road leading into his subject's mind and soul. The brief notes or lengthy reflections, the hurried jottings or the extended explanations, private thoughts not meant for any other human eye, just a word bearing a mark of exclamation, an unprintable expletive, a frank assessment of a colleague's ideas or suggestions, a deep honest look into his own soul, a few searing lines about an enemy to which, on that day, he gave a good bit of his mind, some magnificent words in praise of his wife who stood by him at a critical moment, a prayer to God begging for His guidance and mercy at a historic turning point, a long sigh of hopelessness and despondency, or one of exhaustion and weariness, or one of relief on something well accomplished, thoughts on a quarrel with a dear friend, record of the antics of a querulous but enticing mistress, light-hearted comments on the high and the mighty, a breathless account of a thrilling encounter with an indomitable enemy, details of a journey to a friendly country, hot words addressed in imagination to a diplomat who was as full of bristles as a hedgehog — this is the stuff of which diaries are made, and the immensity of its value to the historian and the biographer needs no elaboration.

The second primary source is the subject's correspondence, including both the letters he wrote and those he received. A few distinctions and reservations are in order here. First of all, letters can be official, public or private.

The official correspondence means letters written to or received from any State institution or functionary (head of a State, prime minister, cabinet, viceroy, governor, speaker or president of a legislature, a civil servant, the courts of law, etc.). Such letters may have been written by an official to another official or by an official to a private citizen or by a private citizen to an official. Every country has made laws and rules governing public access to such correspondence, because though it forms a part of State archives it

must be made available to scholars if the history of the country is to be written.

The distinction between official and private correspondence is not always clear. In some countries, like Britain, the two kinds of letters are grouped together under the title of "public". In others, there are letters which may be called public but not official. For example, the correspondence between the Muslim League and the Congress leaders, or between two League or Congress politicians, in India would be considered public, not official, partly because it was conducted between or among public men and not between or among State functionaries, partly because most of it was made public through the press sooner or later after the event, and partly because it does not form a part of the State archives.

Between the official and the public correspondence lies a no man's land which it is difficult to define or demarcate on any universally or even generally acceptable principles. Consider, for instance, Jinnah's letters to the several Viceroys. Jinnah was a private citizen, not a part of the Government of India or any other official machinery. But he was a public figure, and wrote on public issues. His addressee, on the other hand, was very much an official, in fact the highest official in the land. The subject matter of the correspondence also touched upon official policy or upon public response to official policy. In such cases, I should leave the problem of classification and labelling to those who administer the archives of each country. The historian or biographer need not burden his mind with the category in which a letter is put by the experts; his concern lies with its contents and authorship.

The official and the public categories may overlap and may be difficult to disentangle, but no scholar can confuse public correspondence with the private. One use of the "private" in this context, which might confound the young scholar, should be indicated right away. The writer of the letter, who may be an official or a public man or a private citizen, can put the word PRIVATE on the top of the letter and also on the envelope, but that does not make it private in the archival sense. The word is merely an exhortation addressed to the person to whom it is written to treat the subject matter as confidential and refrain from passing it on to others. I can write a private letter (in this sense) to a friend. The Viceroys used to send several letters marked PRIVATE to the provincial Governors or to the Secretaries of State for India, and

parts of Jinnah-Gandhi and Sapru-Jinnah correspondence was labelled as such by the writer. In the technical sense, if any of my readers insists on fine scientific distinctions, such letters may be given the title of "official correspondence marked private" or "public correspondence marked private". The word "private" does not alter the nature of the letter in terms of our general classification of correspondence into official, public and private.

I must also remark in this connection that some public men and some officials marked their letters with words which they, in their innocence, believed to carry stronger exhortations than the weak, over-used, standard PRIVATE. Thus were born such labels as CONFIDENTIAL, STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL, VERY CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET, TOP SECRET, FOR EYES ONLY, and so on. (After 1947, with all branches of the government resting securely in the hands of the bureaucracy, this tendency to mark every file, memorandum, letter and paper as secret assumed the proportions of an epidemic). For the biographer and the historian these labels should not, in most cases, carry much weight. Generally, the contents of the correspondence can be assessed and analysed by their intrinsic worth, not by their security standing. The careful historian would have done his duty if he indicates, in a footnote or at some other appropriate place, that the letter being quoted or referred to carries such and such a security tab.

Private correspondence in its proper sense is the title given to letters written by a person to his family, friends, acquaintances, lawyers, doctors, bankers and such other people who are not directly connected with or involved in his official or public life. A very good example of this kind of letters is the ones Lord Curzon wrote to his wife from the Viceregal Lodge. Most of them run to twenty or more of hand-written pages that contain a gloriously fascinating account of his thoughts, opinions, impressions and activities. Anglo-India is extremely rich in this primary source. It appears that nearly every British civil servant or army officer (even an odd soldier in the ranks), excited by what he saw in a strange and exotic land for the welfare of whose people he deemed himself uniquely endowed by Providence and personally responsible by his moral code, considered it a part of his duty to communicate his thrill, emotions, responses, impressions and views, and to transmit a record of his movements and activities, to every one he knew well at home. Such letters convey the full range of human feelings and sentiments: childlike

excitement on arriving in a completely unfamiliar part of *his* empire, the initial impact of an outlandish world the like of which had never entered his imagination, the shock at such inconcievable strangeness, the wonder of the novelties which lay about him wherever he went, the discomfort and suffering inflicted by the unimaginable heat, the amusement caused by the behaviour of the Indians, the awe and admiration evoked by the architectural remains of the past, the stunning effect of the variety of things and peoples, the complications and rewards of administering a district, the dismay at certain habits and practices of the natives, the pride in the execution and results of the civilizing mission, the pangs of separation from his children and his home, the hope of one day returning to his island home laden with memories and experiences, sometimes with well-earned decorations, often with nostalgia which seemed never to leave the heart, always at peace with himself for having discharged the imperial duty with care and fervour.

All sorts and classes of people wrote these letters: the senior ICS administrator from the summit of his powerful position; the soldier from his barracks and the mess and the station headquarters and sometimes from the battle-field; the junior official from his subdivisional office and the touring tent; the district officer from his bungalow and the *katcheri* and the village assessment camp; the Deputy Secretary from the Gazetted Officers' Residence or the Secretariat; the health official or the doctor or the engineer from his headquarters, or the hospital or the construction site; the Viceroy's Executive Councillor from his transitory but lucrative and powerful post in Calcutta or Simla or New Delhi; the teacher and professor from the MAO College, Aligarh, or the Government College, Lahore, or the Fort William College, Calcutta, from his vantage-ground of constant intercourse with the young Indian who aspired, and was destined, to occupy the places and the positions vacated by the white rulers; the police officer from his station which gave him a unique opportunity to see the adventurers, heroes and villains of the local underworld; the Bengali tea planter or the Bihari indigo planter from his wide acres which brought him much prosperity and also much odium for his racist views; the businessman of the presidency town from his luxurious office or his banking institution. The list of the writers is unending, and the number of their letters beyond count. To the biographer's great good fortune, much of this correspondence has been preserved and is available in the various

British centres and depositories of archives, private papers and other source material of historical importance. A few of these letters have been published in annotated editions, some have been reproduced or quoted *in extenso* in a large number of biographies, autobiographies and general scholarly works, but the vast majority remains unpublished but readily accessible to anyone living in or visiting Britain.

If we add a few more sources to what we need for writing a biography we have the corpus of material on which historiography draws. In the above discussion I chose the art of biography to illustrate the indispensability of original sources and direct evidence. We should now advance from this narrow tether to a wider scope which embraces all branches of history. Immediately we come up against the question: where is the source material? Some of the facts and considerations which compose the answer are formulated in the rest of this chapter and the next one.

The existence, survival, condition, preservation and availability of this material have suffered from every possible circumstance of social confusion, history, geography, climate, private neglect, official indifference and a perverse sense of privacy. These unfavourable factors and mischances deserve a detailed study because they have made the Pakistani historian's task harder than that of his British or Indian colleague.

SOCIAL CONFUSION

Frequent constitutional breakdowns, recurrent (almost habitual) failures of representative government and long spells of military dictatorship have reduced Pakistan's political panorama to a chaos. One result of this has been a general apathy and a total indifference to what goes on in the country and what the future holds for it. When a people are not interested in their present and don't care about their future, two dimensions (present and future) out of three (past, present and future) of historical awareness are missing. A knowledge of the past (history) is essential for understanding the present. Insensitivity to the present confirms a lack of interest in the past. Indifference to the future also affirms a lack of interest in the past. When a frustrated and bitter people think that they have no future, they begin to suspect that they have had no past worth remembering. History is a recall of the past, but their past neither stimulates nor excites them.

The people, or more accurately the educated classes, of Pakistan have so far lived in a state of complete or partial confusion. Many factors have contributed to this condition. In religion, they have been pulled in different and often opposite directions by sectarian strife, arguments, debates, claims and counter-claims. The Deobandi, the Barelawi, the Hadithist, the Quranist, the *muqallad*, the *ghair-muqallad*, the Sunni, the Shia, the liberal, the conservative, the modern, the traditionalist, the radical, the reactionary, the Hanafi, the eclectic, the Iqbalite, the Maududiite, the Parwaizite — each has his own version of Islam which he is determined to push down the throat of everyone else. Few read the Quran; all are eager to comment upon it. The intolerance among these persuasions has reached a stage where the followers of one will not pray in the mosque of another or behind the *imam* of another. The educated Pakistani who wants to profess and practise a simple, monotheistic, straightforward creed is not allowed to do so; he is forced to choose one of the sectarian glosses. Confusion is the inevitable consequence, and confusion in the matter of such a basic, pervasive and all encompassing religion as Islam, makes havoc of the peace of mind, the intellectual integrity and the call of conscience of the common Pakistani. This perplexity grows into a riot in the soul when the same Pakistani is told everyday that his country was created in the name of Islam.

Culture is a second source of confusion. There are as many cultures in Pakistan as the writers and speakers on the subject. Culture is a matter of value-determination. And we are far from any decision on what values to live by. The conflict rages on all sides: tradition *vs*. modernity, Islam *vs*. secularism, old *vs*. the new, Westernization *vs*. prescription, usage *vs*. innovation, and so on. The nation, if it is a nation, has been standing for forty odd years at an intersection — from which not four but many more roads branch off — not knowing which path to take, hesitating, hoping, praying, fearing. The mind is torn, the power of decision broken, the soul in a ferment. A people who cannot choose its value-system is like a man who does not know why he was born.

Politics has made this confusion worse confounded, and for a perfectly good reason. A society's culture draws and defines the contours of its political values, principles and institutions. When cultural moorings are weak the political structure totters and crumbles.

Apart from the antics of the politicians and the play-acting of the parties, the nation has been receiving from the highest quarters political messages of such a bewildering variety that it is a wonder that it still retains some vestiges of sanity. Liaquat Ali Khan started the game by talking of Islamic Socialism, by obstructing land reforms and by delaying constitution making. Abul Ala Maududi propagated a system in which the head of the State shall have unlimited powers, and a wholly-male parliament shall legislate on those subjects alone which have not already been decided by the Quran, the *hadith*, the decisions of the first four *khalifas*, the rulings of the companions of the Prophet and the laws laid down by the four classical Sunni schools of jurisprudence. Iskander Mirza prescribed a "guided" democracy. General Ayub Khan believed in, propagated and promulgated the gospel of "basic" democracy, and offered to the world such pearls of his wisdom as "democracy is not suited to Pakistan because the country has a hot climate". General Ziaul Huq asserted, in all seriousness, that Muslims all over the world believe in one God, one Prophet and one Book, and therefore ought to have one leader, and insisted on being that one Leader. He also swore that Islam did not countenance political parties, and for many long years outlawed these sinful groups from the country's political scene; but at the end, he instigated, engineered and in practice, if not in law, presided over a brand new Pakistan Muslim League. Zia also said about two dozen times that he had a perfect Islamic system in his mind which he was determined to impose on the country whether it liked it or not; but he died, in the twelfth year of his rule, without disclosing even an outline of this system. Besides these political prophets, saints and adventurers, there have been a few ill-starred and short-lived democrats who talked of democracy and the will of the people and the rule of law. But such heresies were an anathema to the ambitious who believed in brute force and the authority of the mailed fist. The liberals had to die so that a personal standard of power could fly.

Contradictions in our social life make their own contribution to this confusion. While the government speaks and orders in favour of making Urdu the medium of instruction, its department of education encourages, approves and registers English-medium schools of all kinds and varieties. While the Water and Power Development Authority disconnects electric current from all houses, factories, hospitals, schools and colleges in all towns and cities (so

that people suffer, laboratory work ceases, operations are postponed, and industrial production comes to a stop), the same Authority makes a yearly announcement that so many hundred villages have been electrified. While the President and his Cabinet swear by Islam and solemnly declare that Pakistan has been made the fortress of Islam, the Government and the Ministry of Finance make rules and regulations ordering the whitening of all black money and even exempting the bonds issued for the purpose from the otherwise compulsory law of deducation of *zakat*. Such contradictions are as numerous as they are glaring.

There are other phenomena which may be called contradictory or illogical or irrational, but are best described as curiosities. When WAPDA ends its load-shedding programme and the wedding season begins, every tenth house in every road in every city and town is wreathed in garlands of electric bulbs which stay lit all the hours for three or four nights. A simple law banning these totally unnecessary festivals of light can release the country from all load-shedding. The police is charged with the responsibility of keeping the people honest (prevention of crime) and of catching the dishonest (apprehension of the criminal). It discharges its duty by auctioning the headship of the police stations and by making bribe taking a rule of life. The constitution gives the higher judiciary the power to determine the legality and lawfulness of all acts which may be construed to have violated or circumvented the organic or statutory laws of the country. But from 1954 onwards all High Courts, the Federal Court and the Supreme Court have, *toties quoties*, decided in favour of the Governor General's autocratic action, validated the military seizures of power, and authorized the Generals, who had violated the country's basic law, not only to rule the country but to amend the constitution to suit their personal wishes. In one case the court declared General Yahya Khan's military regime a usurper, and in another an ordinance issued by General Zia was declared unconstitutional; but both judgements were delivered after the ruling General's departure or death.

In every civilized country the universities are the institutions which undertake the task of the character building of the nation's youth. In Pakistan the universities have since long ceased to impart either proper education or intellectual leadership or moral training. Instead, unqualified professors lecture (when it pleases them) from 20-year old notes, libraries are inadequate, and examinerships are

sold. In secondary and higher secondary educational institutions the writing of textbooks is allotted on the simple principle of personal friendship or recommendation or influence or plain bribe, and the superintendentships of examination centres are given to the highest bidders. Pakistan is the only Third World country to have built a huge brand new campus for each university, while a majority of schools in every province lack buildings, teachers and basic facilities. In terms of the average income of a Pakistani the rates and prices of the better class hotels are about five times those of comparable hotels in Europe, and yet these places drive a roaring trade. Pakistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, but the great majority of the private and official motor cars on the roads are new, and a good majority of them expensive, models. It is the common practice now for a well-to-do household to have a colour television set and a VCR, but to have no books.

All these contradictions, customs, habits, and fashions have given birth to a society which literally lives in and for today. The only current value is the coin of the mint. Money will buy everything, and everything is in the market, including the politicians, the civil and military servants, the professionals, and the rest. But the real thing is power, and money is all-important precisely because it can buy power. When money is pursuing power and power is chasing money, there emerges a consummate understanding between the rich and the powerful. Each buys the other, to mutual benefit. Protection is guaranteed. Safeguards are built in. The entire machinery runs smoothly, producing gains without investment and dividends without premiums. The foundation of this operation is an obsessive fascination with the today. The yesterday is gone and matters not. The tomorrow is yet not here, and who knows whether there will be a tomorrow. A society which clings to the present so desperately can have no awareness of, not to speak of an interest in, the past. Thus, socially and morally, we do not recognize or acknowledge the past. History does not exist. Nobody can write about a thing that is non-existent.

Intellectually, too, we are chary in acknowledging the past (respecting it is out of the question). Some minor things (but producing major consequences) which we fail to do point to this desideratum. We could have put plaques on buildings and houses associated with historical personages and significant events. We have not done it. The historian of today or tomorrow might like to identify

the building where Justice Shah Din lived, or *The Inqilab* was published, or Akhtar Shirani issued his *Ruman*, or Professor Ahmad Shah Bukhari stayed as a young lecturer and wrote *Patras ke Mazamin*, or Sir Abdul Qadir spent his last days, or Jinnah put up during his visits to Lahore, or *The Civil and Military Gazette* was published, or Iqbal had his law chamber, or the All India Khilafat Conference held its 1929 annual session, or Chaudhri Rahmat Ali set up his household, or the Khaksar movement was established, or the Government College opened its first classes, or the Indian National Congress held its 1930 annual session, or Sir Sikandar Hayat lived, or the first Punjab Lagislative Council met, and so on. For a national or provincial or local historian there are a hundred such landmarks in Lahore alone (and many more throughout the country) which he would like to locate, visit, stare at and contemplate to get the "feel of history". All these places should have been given identification plates, preserved, renovated and photographed. Nothing was done. Most of them are now gone for ever and replaced by new buildings and commercial markets. The past is beyond visual recall. History has been destroyed — deliberately, effectively, irretrievably.

What about the landmarks that are still with us? The ugly steel road bridge erected near the Chowburji in Lahore obstructs the view of an important historical and architectural remain. The Chowburji itself is neglected and unrepaired, and is given over to commercial vandalism. Several other buildings of great historical significance stand unattended and unnoticed. A housing colony might soon encroach upon Jahangir's mausoleum, one of the four great Mughal remains of the country.

This has been allowed to happen because all our attention is so exclusively focussed on the present that the past, recent or remote, signifies nothing; it has no message, remembrance or lesson for us.

This neglect of the past is also reflected in the fact that we have no guide books to cities or towns. Even the Tourism Development Corporation does not produce these (the only information it provides is limited to a leaflet containing distances, list of hotels and rest-houses and places to visit, and a few smutches which are called photographs).

These things are bound to happen in a society whose intelligentsia is composed of two classes of people: the morally upright but intellectually narrow, and the intellecutally progressive but morally insensitive. Integrity and intellect rarely meet. The intelligentsia's cheerfulness (we have a bright future, there is nothing to worry about, all is well!) arises from intellectual inadequacy or dishonesty or stupidity or evasion or self-deception, not from confidence or reflection or thought or introspection or high spirits. Its mind is unused to thought, its passion unaccustomed to discipline, its character undefiled by intellect, its mental nature untouched by humanity. The roots of these infirmities lie in the educational system of the society; the fruit they bear is an unending and passionate love affair with money.

The country has laid a sword of ignorance across itself. Education here means enabling the people to read ready-made trash. The intellectuals revolve on their axis: living and thinking in isolation. Even the elite is so narrowly educated as to resemble a furrow, not a field. Thoughts and words seek each other in their mind without ever meeting. The teacher who leads the flock into the valley of ignorance with a horrifying *insouciance* is a class by himself. No idea ever enters his head, nor any ever leaves it. "Facts" pass from his notebook to the notebook of the student without passing through the mind of either. He commands the heights of indignation, but does not know the depths of understanding.

The vacuum created by the absence of education is filled by a craving for material gain. Our standard of value has a currency basis. And wealth has slipped the yoke of morals. The ordinary Pakistani of today should heed the warning with which Rudyard Kipling reprimanded a friend of his: "Some day you will meet a man who cares for none of these things [money, position, glory], then you will know how poor you are". He may think that he is rich in merchandise. He is certainly poor in purpose.

A land from which education and morals have fled and given place to selfishness and love of money becomes a place where the individual who is not a hammer is bound to become an anvil. Therefore everyone tries to be a hammer. The result is a moral chaos where no holds are barred, no traditions acknowledged, no customs respected, no conventions followed. We are a generation at war with the values of its past. We have surrendered to the gods of

wealth and power. To us mental slavery has become a habit, liberty an accident.

The grand result is a blinding confusion. Whirling like the bobbin of a spinning-wheel we are moving faster than we can think. We believe we can change our ethos as if changing a shirt. In reality, our morals are in the dark ages, our minds are in the middle ages, our heads in the air, our ambitions in the nuclear age — nobody cares where the body lies; more importantly, where the soul agonises. Therefore, we are always passing through revolving doors. We have bound ourselves to the murky present so fast and forgotten our past so completely that we can't see the (or any) future. Men who do not deny their past are wiser than men who do. I pray that this simple truth may one day dawn upon us. Amen!

Basically and in the classical sense of the word, history is a narration or collection of traditions. Every society has its traditions which embody and enshrine its past. Every society, like every human being, has a natural, inborn, irresistible interest in and respect for its traditions, because they make up its value-system, mould its culture and determine its present and future. In every human mind nature has implanted a conserving sense, an instinct to preserve the past, an automatic response to the call of what has gone before, an inbuilt esteem for things old and ancient. However much and fast a society changes, it cannot jettison all its past to alleviate the pains of modernization. The greatest revolutions, of France, Russia and China, not only preserved a good part of the values and traditions of the *ancien regime*, but were themselves inspired by a long line of thinkers and writers who had been at work for several decades before the upsurge came. The great monotheistic religions were a series of successive revelations, each built upon a solid base provided by its predecessor. In South Asis, Buddhism streamed out of Aryan Hinduism, and Sikhism, with all its radical departure in faith and practice, retained the social life and cultural mores of Hinduism. Even (or, we must say, most of all) the primitive societies of all times and regions have upheld the past with a surprising tenacity.

Since the end of the eighteenth century Europe has transformed itself from a semi-feudal, pre-industrial, agricultural and mostly stagnant society into a post-industrial, atomic, technological and intellectually vibrating society. Yet it has passed from one phase to the other without rejecting its traditions, some of which go back only to the preceding century, some to the age of

Reformation, some to the Fathers of the Christian Church, some to the Roman world and some to the golden days of Hellas. Nothing of any value or use was allowed to be lost.

It seems that Pakistan has lost all sense of the past, because its society is changing so fast that, there being no time for thought or reflection, an exercise which must precede selection and choice, every traditional value and institution is rejected inanely, fatuously and unfeelingly. Look at the way all ceremonies and ceremonials accompanying our rites of passage have changed in one generation. With the mores have gone the values, with the values the traditions, and with the traditions, history. With the bath water we have thrown away the baby. And now, historically speaking, we are all orphans — children without parents, adults without families, individuals without relatives, a society without roots, a people without a past, a nation without a history.

This is a tragedy. A greater tragedy is that we don't feel the loss.

HISTORY

Historical forces have worked to our disadvantage in four ways. First, the partition of India proved disastrous in so far as it cut asunder Muslim political organizations, Muslim families of note and Muslim centres of education and research. Most of these (Muslim League, Jamiat-ul-Ulema, Momin Conference, Central National Muhammadan Association, Muhammadan Literary Society of Calcutta, All India Muhammadan Educational Conference and several others) had their offices and secretariats in territories now forming India. The All India Muslim League is the only organization whose papers could be brought over from Delhi to Karachi; even in this case we don't know if everything was moved and in what physical condition, and how much of it was destroyed during the several years when the precious material was lying unattended in gunny bags in the humid climate of Karachi when General Ayub Khan declared the Pakistan Muslim League, along with all other parties, an unlawful organization and ordered that its offices be sealed and its papers and records seized by the police. The Aligarh-educated and Sandhurst-trained army officer who justified his forcible and illegal dismissal of a constitutional government with the argument that he wished to save the country from a disaster was not aware that by issuing this particular order he was ensuring the destruction of a part, according

to some reliable reports about half, of the only extant historical evidence and source material connected with the political evolution of modern Muslim India.

The records of the provincial branches of the All India Muslim League met a worse fate. Most of them were left behind in India, and I have heard nothing about their existence or availability. The state of the papers of the branches situated in Pakistan was even more unfortunate, and therefore more inexcusable.

The Bengal Muslim League had its headquarters in Calcutta, but Abul Hashim, its enterprising and devoted General Secretary, told me in Dacca in 1965 that he had somehow managed to get at least some of its records over to Dacca, but then with Ayub's accession to power they had been taken away by the police. I have no knowledge about the condition in which they were released several years later. The League had virtually no existence in Baluchistan and the NWFP till 1947, and nothing has been heard of the records there. The Sind League was very much alive from about 1935 onwards, but no information has come my way about the availability of its records. The Punjab Muslim League papers had a horrid end. When the police, under Government's orders, raided the office situated in Laxmi Chowk on the McLeod Road there was a struggle between it and the staff of the party and during the scuffle somebody started a fire (the party accused the police of this act of arson) in which the entire record was destroyed.

General Ayub Khan made another contribution to the destruction of the League papers. When in later years he was forced by political circumstances to revive the political parties, he chose to appropriate the Muslim League to his own ownership and to make it the official party. Most of the old Muslim Leaguers held a meeting and revived what they called the real old League. But this was only the beginning of the League's career as a political prostitute. Since then there have been about a dozen Pakistan Muslim Leagues, each claiming to be the genuine and only continuation of the All India Muslim League and of Jinnah's Pakistan Muslim League. Anyone attempting a history of the Pakistan Muslim League has an impossible task before him.

A few parties and movements belonged to the areas now forming Pakistan. The state of their records, or the current information about it, makes a sorry tale. As far as I know (and to

hear myself contradicted authoritatively will give me much pleasure and will also hold out some hope that at least a part of our history may some day be chronicled), the records of the Sind Unity Party, the Sind Khilafat Committee, the Punjab Khilafat Committee, the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, the Punjab Zamindara League, the "Niliposh" Party of Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, the Punjab Congress Committee, the Majlis-i-Kabir-i-Pakistan, the Communist Party of Pakistan or any of its provincial branches in Pakistan, are not extant completely or partially; if some of them are available in some form, either the fact is not known to the historians or those who possess them are not prepared to show them to the scholars or even to admit that they have got them.

In 1975, when I was Chairman of the National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research, I came to know that the private papers of Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi and an extensive part of his and the Khaksar organization's publications were available with Mashriqi's senior wife at the Mashriqi residence in Ichchra, Lahore. I visited her, examined some of the records and, finding them of real worth, began to negotiate with her about the terms of sale. In the middle of these talks I discovered that in his old age Mashriqi had married a young Pathan girl, and that this junior wife would contest the senior wife's (or her children's) right to dispose of these papers. At the same time the office-bearers of the Khaksar organization made it known that in their opinion the copyright and sales right of all publications of the party (including Mashriqi's own writings) vested in the party, i.e., its office-bearers, and did not belong to the Mashriqi family. Fearing a complicated and lengthy litigation among the various claimants, I referred the case to the Federal Ministry of Law. The advice I received was in the negative. If the Commission purchased the records, most probably the two wives and the party would go to the court and obtain an injunction, and the articles bought and paid for by us would be sealed and would be beyond our access or control till the end of the proceedings of the case. In the light of this legal advice, I ordered the Commission not to proceed further with the purchase and to withhold the payment of the sale price which had been agreed upon between Mrs. Saida Mashriqi, the elder begum, and the Commission.

But I was concerned about the physical condition of the papers we wanted to acquire. The bulk of them were already in a bad shape, and even some published material was crumbling into

pieces. It was easy to see that by the time the impending legal case was finally decided (such cases of civil custody take several years to reach their end) most of what we wanted to buy would no longer be of any use to anyone. I decided to do something about it. On my own responsibility as Chairman, and without any obligation to whoever was then the rightful owner of the property, I took a team of the Commission's department of archival preservation to the Mashriqi residence in Lahore and, with Mrs. Saida Mashriqi's permission (all the things were then in her physical possession), asked it to repair, mend, bind and give the required preservative treatment to the records, and then to pack them carefully so that they remained undamaged during the next few years. This salvage and protection operation took three weeks and cost the Commission a few thousand rupees. The idea was to save this valuable material irrespective of who inherited it. I planned to inform the court, if and when the papers were made a subject of legal in-fighting among the Mashriqi family itself and between the family and the party, that the property in dispute had been thus treated by the Commission in the national interest and without any obligation to anyone. Even if the Commission could not purchase it in the future for legal or any other reasons, at least it would not be destroyed by climate or negligence, and would still be available to the historian of the future. I informed the Prime Minister of the action I had taken.

In 1976 Mrs. Saida Mashriqi came to see me in Islamabad a number of times, and one of her sons, probably the eldest, telephoned me repeatedly to persuade me to go ahead with the purchase. I resisted the pressure. In early 1977 I received a summary addressed by the Minister of Information to the Prime Minister recommending the purchase of the material without any loss of time, on which I was asked to give my comments. I appended a long note narrating the history of my efforts to acquire the material, the legal complication, the advice of the Ministry of Law, my decision to postpone the purchase, and my action *re.* preserving the material at the expense of the Commission. The file did not come back to me. After a few months the government was overthrown by a military *coup*. I was suspended by the Chief Martial Law Administrator, mentally tortured for ten months and then forced to resign and leave the country. I don't know what happened to the Mashriqi papers after that.

The second way in which the 1947 partition dealt unfairly with the division of historical source material between India and Pakistan related to the cultural, social and educational institutions. Chance and historical circumstances had ordained that a very large majority of the Muslim cultural and religious centres be situated in the non-Pakistan territories.

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Scientific Society, the Anglo-Indian Defence Association, the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference, and the University of Aligarh were left behind in the United Provinces. So were the Dar-ul-Ulum of Deoband, the Nadwat-ul-Ulema and its Dar-ul-Musannifin. The Jamia Millia Islamia was in Delhi. The Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Library, the finest and the richest collection of Islamic manuscripts in the subcontinent, was in Bankipur, Bihar. The Islamia College, Calcutta, was in Bengal. The Nawal Kishore Press, which published hundreds of classics and other rare books of broad range and great value, was in Lucknow. Above all, the riches of the Nizam's dominions lay beyond Pakistan's reach: the Salar Jung Museum, the Nizam's personal library, the Osmania University and so many other institutions which constituted a cultural legacy of unparalleled value. In the private sphere, several *ta'luqdars* of the United Provinces and the *mansabdars* of the Deccan had rich private collections of books, journals, manuscripts, historical documents, Mughal *farmans*, ancient coins, and specimens of original calligraphy. Some old families of Delhi could show possessions of equal worth and pedigree. The concentration of these riches outside Pakistan meant that our historians were deprived of access to these institutions, libraries, publishing houses, colleges and universities, centres of research and learning, and to all the fruits of their work.

Then there were some quality journals and newspapers which were issued from these (now) alien territories. Famous titles run lightly on the tongue and pleasing memories invade the mind when one recalls *Al-Balagh*, *Al-Hilal*, *Hamdard*, *Hamdam*, *Wakil*, *Al-Nadwa*, *Tulu-i-Islam*, *Tarjuman-ul-Quran*, *Saqi*, *Comrade*, *The Aligarh Institute Gazette*, *The Muhammadi*, *The Muslim Patriot*, *The Star of India* and others. Most of this journalism was literature, some of it commanded wide reading and influence in high places. All these trained, educated and moulded the modern Muslim mind of India. No Pakistani library has complete files of even one or two of them.

Pakistan was lucky in having got Lahore in the 1947 dispensation. The city had been an intellectual centre of renown and the home or temporary domicile of many men of letters and journalists of national reputation. From it were published several Urdu journals of a very high standing: Shaikh Abdul Qadir's *Mukhzan*, Mian Bashir Ahmad's *Humayun*, Salahuddin Ahmad's *Adabi Duniya*, Hakim Yusuf Hasan's *Nairang-i-Khyal*, Akhtar Shirani's *Hazardastan* and *Ruman*, the *Oriental College Magazine*, and a few others. Not a single library in the country has complete runs of all of them.

The same self-invited poverty has hit the political journalism of the Pakistani areas. The Khudai Khidmatgars' *Pakhtun*, the Khaksars' *Al-Islah*, *Al-Wahid* of Sind, Zafar Ali Khan's *Zamindar*, Munshi Mahbub Alam's *Paisa Akhbar*, *The Inqilab* of Ghulam Rasul Mihr and Abdul Majid Salik, Sayyid Habib's *Siasat*, Shaikh Nur Ilahi's *Ehsan*, the English trio of *The Eastern Times, The New Times* and *The Muslim League*, and the several weeklies and dailies which the Ahrars issued fitfully and irregularly but with admirable effort and devotion — all these wielded political influence, reached a large and educated reading public, spoke for a wide variety of parties and points of view, fashioned the Muslim public opinion, and in their collectivity constituted the political thinking of northern India (and even areas beyond it). Without consulting them no historian can even pretend to set down what the Muslims of these areas felt, thought, planned and actually did. Yet, to my knowledge, none of these newpapers and magazines exists in its entirety in any collection open to the public.

In the third place, in the procedures adopted by the Government of India under Lord Mountbatten for dividing and allocating the assets of the central government between India and Pakistan an irreparable injury was inflicted on Pakistan when the Council for the Partition of India decided that the archives of the Government of India shall not be split and would go to the Indian Union. By this fiat Pakistan was deprived of all the official papers (which also contained a great deal of private collections and published material) connected with her history and covering the entire period of British rule in the subcontinent. The record of the proceedings of the Council do not show that the Muslim League nominees on it protested against this outrage.

Finally, from the outset the strained relations between India and Pakistan and the three open wars between them have made it certain that the vast historical material left behind in India shall always be out of reach of the Pakistani scholar. The restrictions imposed on Pakistani citizens' visits to India mean in practice that a scholar is obliged to go to London to consult the material most of which is available in New Delhi at a fraction of the cost of a visit to Europe.

This lack of access to the Indian sources is much more harmful to us than to the Indians. First, the official constraints are tighter on our side. Indian scholars and writers often come to Pakistan, deliver lectures, speak at social gatherings arranged to welcome them, and sometimes even give a bit of their mind to us. Pakistani scholars are not allowed by their own government to go to India, even for purely academic purposes. Secondly, no private citizen of Pakistan has India in the list of countries entered in his passport, and needs special permission from his own government to get his passport endorsed for India, and this permission is hard to get. The government servants, the Brahmin caste of Pakistan, are above this law; but they cannot travel without prior written permission of the government.

Thirdly, for most of the last forty-two years the operational visa rules between the two countries have stipulated, on the Pakistani side, that only three categories of travellers will be issued Indian visas: businessmen, those having blood relatives in India, and pilgrims to Muslim shrines situated in India. Political ill-will has at all times reduced the number of business travellers to a negligible trickle as there is no trade between enemy countries. The only Pakistanis with blood relations in India are the *muhajirs*, the overwhelming majority of whom are from the United Provinces. As for the pilgrims, the shrines in the approved list being so few and the number of each party so severely limited by agreement, their strength is also slight. Thus, what the rules mean in practice is that any Urdu-speaking Pakistani migrant from India or his children or grandchildren are allowed to go to India, while a Punjabi, Sindhi, Baluchi, or Pathan scholar or writer, however eminent in his field and however academic and literary the objects of his visit, is debarred from leaving for India. The implication of the discrimination is clear: every *muhajir* is an officially approved patriot with an automatic security clearance; everybody else's loyalty is

suspect and he has to establish a special case in his favour to get an endorsement for India in his passport. Similar rules are not applied by India to her citizens, who are free to travel to any country of their choice.

Fourthly, Pakistani scholars need what is available in India much more than Indians need what we have to offer them. As I mentioned above, there is a wealth of Muslim religious, cultural and political legacy still extant in India whose relevance to Pakistan's past is unquestionable. By disallowing *historians* from working in India, the Pakistani officialdom is persisting in an unforgivably shortsighted policy, morally, intellectually and materially. Morally, because it has no constitutional right to stop a citizen from visiting any foreign land, and also because it is only the historian who has been singled out for the punishment. We do send and receive cricket and hockey teams, troupes of artistes and singers and musicians, and allow Urdu poets, journalists, and men of letters to attend conferences; but there is a stigma on the historian which he must carry like his cross. Intellectually, because the historian, thus branded and imprisoned, cannot use the Indian sources of his own past, and is, in this way, condemned to work without the essential sources which are easily available across the border. Materially, because the ban on visiting India means the sending of our young scholars to Britain — an unnecessary drain on our foreign exchange; it also means that no Pakistani scholar can go to Britain at his private cost.

In the exchange of books also Pakistan has, of its own accord, decided to deprive herself of all research and scholarship of Indian origin. India is among the six biggest publishing countries of the world. In publishing scholarly and literary books in the English language it stands third after Britain and the United States, and in this field the quality and size of its contribution to historical and allied research are well known to every Pakistani who has worked in a European or American library. Since 1947 several thousand volumes have appeared on ancient, medieval and modern Indian history, and the majority of them are essential reading for the Pakistani historian. Leaving the rest aside, more and better books have been written and published in India than in Pakistan on Islam and on the Muslim period of Indian history. Further, in the last twenty years, with the cost of book production rising steeply in Britain, several British (and American) historians working on the subcontinent have got their books published in India. Still further,

India is issuing over fifty history journals of high quality which often carry articles and reviews of direct interest to a Pakistani historian.

By depriving the Pakistani scholar of an opportunity to read, consult and use all these publications, our officialdom has made sure that his work is based on incomplete sources and that he must not be allowed to read even his own history published in India. The dimensions of this tragedy emerge in their stark reality when we see that everything published in Pakistan is available to and is being used by the Indian historians, to their great advantage, while the Pakistani historians are excluded from a reciprocal facility. Such egregious stupidity would be inconceivable anywhere else.

Geography

If history has done this to the Pakistani historian, geography has been no kinder to him. Two factors have worked to his detriment. All those parts of India where Muslim culture flourished in the past are separated from the Pakistan of today by long distances. The nearest of them, Delhi, is 300 miles from Lahore. Lucknow and Aligarh lie still farther. Bihar and Bengal are at the other end of the subcontinent. The Deccan in the deep south is as far as Turkey in the other direction. Even granting the Muslim minority status of these areas (except Bengal), had they been contiguous with Pakistan's borders and still parts of India they would have been more familiar to the Pakistani historian's awareness, especially in the case of the younger historians who know them as mere names on maps and references in books.

The second factor is a combination of natural geography and human folly. The Muslim League leadership demonstrated singular ineptitude and incredible lack of political sense in demanding, striving for and creating a single state of Pakistan with her two unequal (in every conceivable way) parts separated by 1,200 miles of a resentful (at that time) and hostile (in the near future) foreign country.

For the historian this artificial yoking together has had two results. In the first place, between 1947 and 1971 when East Pakistan was a far-flung and unfamiliar part of Pakistan, the historians of the two wings rarely met together, could not visit one another, did not know each other's problems and interests, and in many cases were working on the same themes but from two different source materials

and unshared points of view. The West Pakistani historian used sources in the English and Urdu languages, the East Pakistani in the English and Bengali languages. The one was not qualified to judge the scholarship of the other, nor equipped to seek any guidance from his bibliographical references, nor genuinely interested in the source material used by him, nor, in many cases, inclined to look sympathetically at his findings, however scholarly, balanced and well founded these might have been. It was, one must admit, as unjust to expect a Bengali to read an account of the Ahrar party with excitement as to find a Pathan with a lively interest in a history of the Krishka Proja Party. Except an acknowledgement of Islam as a common factor (but with which most historians and their readers had only a nodding acquaintance) and a vague, general, often sentimental, rarely critical, sympathy with the All India Muslim League, the historians of the two wings had little in common.

This gulf of near mutual incomprehension directly led to the break-up of 1971, and the West Pakistani historians and textbook writers share, in equal measure with the politicians, the generals, the civil servants and the businessmen, the responsibility for dividing the hearts and minds of Pakistanis. In all histories written for adults or students between 1947 and 1970 the entire emphasis was on seeking and finding the political and intellectual foundations of the Pakistan movement and the State of Pakistan generally in the past developments of northern India and more particularly in the public and cultural attainments of what had come to be known as the Aligarh Movement. The role of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his colleagues in awakening the Muslims of the subcontinent was made the sole starting point of the "freedom" movement. The achievements of the Urdu-speaking Delhi and the United Provinces were presented as the intellectual foundations of Indian Muslim nationalism, to the exclusion of all other provinces. Even in journalism, all credit was given to Muhammad Ali, Abul Kalam Azad, Hasrat Mohani and Jalib Dehlawi. In literature all attention was focussed on Urdu writers and poets.

With the exception of a few stray and cursory references to Nawab Salimullah Khan of Dacca as one of the founders of the All India Muslim League, A. K. Fazlul Huq as the mover of the Lahore Resolution, Khwaja Nazimuddin as a loyal follower of Jinnah, and one or two other public men, Bengali leaders found no place in the national annals. The West Pakistani reader owned and was familiar

even with all the Congress Muslim leaders of north India (Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Asif Ali, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, and even the smaller fry), but he was unaware of even the names of Bengali leaders whose fealty to the Muslim cause had never weakened or faltered. He was well acquainted with Abdul Majid Salik, but could not identify Mawlana Akram Khan; he had heard of, perhaps even come across some quotations from, *The Paisa Akhbar*, but *Muhammadi* was an alien name to him. He knew far more about Sayyid Ahmad Barelawi and his activities than about Haji Shariatullah and the Faraizi Movement. Shibli Naumani was a household name in his circle, but he would have raised his eyebrows at a mention of Mawlawi Karamat Ali of Jaunpur or Sayyid Muhsin of Hugly. Above all, while his mind and attention were assaulted every day by an unending and vigorous flow of writings, scholarly and popular, on Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his co-workers, the names and achievements of such giants of Muslim renaissance in Bengal as Nawab Abdul Latif Khan Bahadur and Sayyid Ameer Ali were kept firmly outside his ken. Bengal had established a Muslim political organization exactly fifty-one years before the formation of the All India Muslim League, the Muhammadan Literary Society of Calcutta was older than Sayyid Ahmad Khan's earliest attempt to promote Muslim education, and the Central National Muhammadan Association was fully functional with active branches in the Punjab and Sind at a time when the Muslim leaders of the United Provinces considered it unwise and unnecessary to organize themselves politically. All these facts of history were withheld (deliberately?) by the West Pakistani historians from their readers.

The result was a national disaster, which the historians should have been the first to anticipate. The Bengali scholars were disgusted with the place which their West Pakistani colleagues allotted to Muslim Bengal in their accounts of modern Muslim India and their histories of the Pakistan movement. Mercifully, the average educated Bengali could not read Urdu, or he would have been outraged at the one-sided nonsense which was being dished up as serious history in West Pakistan. But gradually the ill tidings reached him — there was no pedestal for his heroes in the Pakistan pantheon, the renaissance in his area did not form a part of the Muslim national revival in the subcontinent, and his political and cultural past had made no contribution to the history of Pakistan.

The politically aware and educated sections of the East Pakistanis began to ask questions, first in private gatherings and then from public platforms. What is going on? Why are we treated like this? Were we or were we not a part of Muslim India? Did we play no role in the making of Pakistan? Did we not support the Muslim League when it had few friends in the Punjab and none in the NWFP? Did we not form a Muslim League government in Bengal at a time when no other Muslim province had a League ministry and when the top League leadership in the United Provinces was prepared to join the Congress if it could only get two places in the cabinet? Why is all this being forgotten? Why are we being brainwashed to believe that everything important in the history of Pakistan happened in Aligarh and Aligarh alone? Is this a campaign of vilifying us as, in some sense, being not fully Muslim? Are our leaders less deserving than even the Jamaat-i-Islami, Majlis-i-Ahrar and Congress politicians, who in their time reviled Jinnah and opposed the creation of Pakistan? Why is our loyalty suspect, our patriotism in doubt? Are we or are we not Pakistanis? (I have tried to recall here the exact words uttered by my East Pakistani and later Bengladeshi colleagues at the universities of London, Manchester, Khartoum, Oxford and Heidelberg between 1957 and 1987).

What the successive governments of Pakistan and the businessmen and journalists of Karachi and the Punjab did in and to East Pakistan after 1947 fell in the category of politics (of a perverse variety). But the questions cited above bore upon history. When the two forces were allowed to join hands, the highroad to secession lay wide and open. The bed of the road was dug up by the West Pakistani historians, the macadam was laid by the politicians and the administrators, and it was opened to traffic by the army. That is how the presentation of history makes and unmakes nations. And that is how geography governs history.

Climate

There are few regions or even places in the world which are kind to man or things. This is the cruel aspect of nature: all matter, animate or inanimate, has to fight for its existence. Man has a will to survive and has fashioned ever new devices to make his life secure, bearable, comfortable, even luxurious. But paper has no life of its own, and has to be looked after by man. In the last one century science has discovered, evolved, revived or improved upon several

ways of saving old and deteriorating paper, mending and repairing damaged books and records, storing these precious things in artificially-created climatic conditions to keep them in good shape, treating them so as to prolong their life in the original state and thus preserving them for the ages to come.

This is a purely Western achievement, not only because modern science was born in Europe but also because the Europeans have been, since the Reformation, intensely history conscious. This consciousness was an accompaniment of their rise to pre-eminence in the world and of their interest in education and scholarship. The Renaissance brought to their attention the riches of a past that extended as far back as human memory, folk literature, old classics and archaeology could trace it. Several things came swimming into their ken: interest in history, thirst for knowledge, respect for ancient learning, value of manuscripts, significance of oral sources of information. Almost overnight there sprung in their mind a keen desire, a restless craving, to discover, know and understand their past. By a happy chance the miracle of science appeared at the same time. They applied the new scientific method to the acquisition of old knowledge. In the technical field, this gave birth to modern archaeology and, a little later, to ethnology and anthropology. In the intellectual field, it created a new educational system which emphasized a methodical approach to problems, careful observation of phenomena, art of putting everything in orders and categories, study of facts, use of original sources, cautious analysis, rational interpretation, and balanced assessment. At the heart of this educational system lay the classical studies. In all the great universities — Heidelberg, Padua, Paris, Oxford, Cambridge — the classics became the basis of liberal education and the foundation of a gentleman's training.

For the first time a new educated class emerged in Europe which was brought up on the classics. A pattern was set for the next three centuries. In every school and university the student read history and philosophy (the two constituent elements of the classics) as if his life depended upon mastering the two subjects. And, in a way, it did. Knowledge of the past made him aware of his own antecedents, of the origin of his culture and religion, of the deeds of his forefathers. With this awareness came a pride in his past, and also an interest in his present. Patriotism was strengthened, nationalism was nurtured, and slowly imperialism emerged on the

horizon. Europe was on its way to play its greatest role on the stage of world history.

The inclusion of philosophy in the classics syllabus was neither accidental nor superfluous. No two disciplines are more closely connected than history and philosophy. History provides us with facts, philosophy with the ability to understand and relate them. History is narration, philosophy is analysis. History tells the story of events, philosophy analyses them. History says: it happened like this. Philosophy asks: why did it happen in this way and not in that? If we read history without philosophy we have information without understanding; if we read it with philosophy, we have knowledge. Information and knowledge are two different things. Information makes us a robot; knowledge makes us a sapient being. Information is a required qualification for a clerk; knowledge for a professor. Information is a dimension of opinion; knowledge is an ascent to truth.

Once the European had been trained to value and love his past, he turned to the task of preserving it. Archives were established, libraries enlarged, manuscripts collected, old papers hunted out, government records reorganized, depositories created, newspaper collections ordered, private correspondence preserved, decaying sources copied, rare books reprinted, documents annotated and edited, reference books compiled, sources of information brought together, public records offices opened, scholarly access to State papers facilitated, laws of embargo softened, time limits for the opening of secret papers set, etc.

In short, the student of history was given all he required for his work. He was even invited to enter the holy precincts of the departments of State and read and quote and discuss what a king or a prime minister or a secretary or an ambassador had written, in the strictest confidence and in his official capacity, not even dreaming that many years later a horde of outsiders, even foreigners, would be free to turn his ideas and phrases and words into a happy hunting ground in search of the hitherto hidden official motives, intrigues, little jealousies, deliberate lies, impolitic frankness, transparent reticence, cruel deceits, well-intentioned dishonesties, sincere advice, wise suggestions, philosophic reflections, innocent circumventions of rules, plans of conquest, shameful surrenders, humiliating treaties, thoughtless orders, peremptory directives, weighty decisions — the kaleidoscopic world of a king on the throne, a politician in office, a

general in command or a bureaucrat in control. This chaotic, rewarding, exasperating world is the source material of the historian.

When the European governments, archivists, curators, librarians and scholars began the task of collecting, arranging, stocking and preserving these records, they came up against two enemies: human indifference and climate. The first was vanquished with education; the second with science. Technology was harnessed to evolve the new archival science. Methods were devised and ways invented for repairing damaged papers, treating all kinds of parchment with chemicals, binding outsize prints, airconditioning the buildings serving as depositories, periodical cleaning of papers and books with improved machinery, photocopying the material liable to decay, filming delicate or brittle or rare records, and so on. This work of renovation has been a major achievement in modern source collecting and an inestimable boon for the historian and research scholar in every field of knowledge.

It is an accident (or is it?) and an irony of history that Islam and the West have always been riding the see-saw of history. The imperial glory of Islam shone the brightest when Europe was sunk in its dark ages. When, in the seventeenth century, the West set out on its magnificent journey towards the pinnacle of political and intellectual power, the Islamic world began its silent retreat into political defeat, intellectual decline and moral degeneration. It is a tragedy of world history and a great loss of mankind that the two great civilizations have never run a coterminous parallel course where, standing on an equal footing, they could have borrowed and learnt so much from each other, enriching human life and eliminating so many misunderstandings, conflicts, wars and bloodshed. This is one of the most saddening alases of history.

With intellectual decay there descended upon the Islamic world long years (still continuing) of educational backwardness and loss of self-respect. The Muslim lost the knowledge of his history, and out of this ignorance arose frustration and cynicism. He had no longer a sense of the value of history. He had no interest in his past. He allowed the imperial foreigners to carry off his libraries and his historical source material. When he regained his independence and surveyed the damage he was dismayed. But the dismay remained a negative reaction. Little was done to put his scholarly house in order. What had gone had gone for good. But he could have tried to gather

what was left, to supplement and enlarge it, to take care of it, to preserve it, and thus to build up his archives.

When the Western man had faced the same predicament a few hundred years ago he had used his zeal and interest to preserve his past and put his scientific knowledge at the service of this task. He had conquered climate, not only in the ways of his everyday living, but also in the protection of his records against the variations of weather and the ravages of time.

In a country like Pakistan geography is an enemy of the historian in two ways. For over half the year most of the country is too hot for any serious and prolonged intellectual exertion (this applies to all scholarly work, not to the historian's labour alone). But this is a minor point. On a vastly more serious level, our climate plays havoc with our historical records. Apart from the ancient historian whose source material is carved in stone or erected in bricks or buried under the earth or (on the secondary level) preserved in recently published works of research, all others in the field depend on the written records. This means dealing with paper, one of the most delicate and brittle materials to carry the weight of historical knowledge.

It is not easy to take care of paper in Pakistan's climate against the attacks mounted by several animate and inaminate enemies. First comes dust, a powder well refined by nature to enter every door, window, ventilator and crevice. Nothing is beyond its reach; nothing can stop it from blowing or creeping in. It soils the paper right away, and then weakens it over a span of time. It saps the binding of books. It discolours the printed page and disfigures the illustrations. It will dim the brilliant clarity of a photograph in a few months. Then there is heat which affects the fibre of the paper, makes it brittle and creases and wrinkles it. It is unwise to put an elastic rubber band round a rolled paper or a reproduction or a sheaf of sheets. In one summer season the rubber will melt into a sticky paste which will glue itself to the paper to damage it irretrievably and smudge the lettering on it. In a few years' time heat also affects all bindings, making the boards crooked and loosening the spine.

A more insidious enemy is the humid weather, which affects human organism and everything made of paper or board with equal impartiality. Between July and October the rains come, and the air is

so dense with moisture that even slight carelessness in storing books and papers might result in partial or total loss. Even more subtle than the dust, the moisture will reach inside locked suitcases, closely panelled bookshelves, even boarded-up houses. It will sap the strength of the stoutest paper and of everything that goes to make a book: board, string, thread, glue, and silver or gold or any colour used for lettering the back. On unbound loose papers or filed documents it feeds with the avidity and swiftness of the locust. That is not all. Metal common pins and clips and staples and tagging ends get rusted, damage the papers within their touch, and discolour the lettering lying within their reach. It is hazardous even to use an ordinary string to bind the papers with. It might absorb so much moisture that it will fray and then pass on its water to the paper.

Dust, heat and moisture combine to produce the animate kingdom, a good many species of which find paper a delectable food. The filth, dirt and unsanitary sorroundings ensure the birth, longevity and large variety of these insects: open drains, puddles of dirty water, mud, choked sewers, garbage strewn on the roadside outside residences, offices and hospitals, uncovered gutters and manholes, dumps of refuse, animals' droppings, cattle houses situated in the centres of cities and towns, and such other spots too innumerable to mention. These insects will devour paper with the efficiency of a shredder, leaving large holes and gaps, often preferring the written or printed area (they like the taste of ink of any colour), merrily eating their way through thick volumes unhindered by the strongest binding, in fact flourishing on its leather or cloth. Entire sheets disappear, carefully kept old letters are reduced to illegible slips, manuscripts are gnawed at and turned into small pieces which cannot be put together to make up even a part of the lost text, typescripts become meaningless gibberish. The loss is enough to break the heart of any librarian, scholar or private collector of family records.

In a country where, according to the reports of the World Health Organization, the air of the major cities and the highways is not fit to be breathed in by humans or animals and water supplied to the inhabitants of the principal conurbations is undrinkable, a special kind of optimism is required to entertain any hope that the official agencies will take any step to eradicate at least the major hazards to public cleanliness. In a society where human beings are an

expendable commodity (on the roads and in the slums and the hopsitals), books and papers only make good fuel for the bonfires.

Still the administration, which controls all libraries and archives, could have done something to improve matters. The valuable holdings and records could have been given more attention and better treatment. Even private and individual collections could have been provided with free services of fumigation, chemical treatment, lamination and periodical dusting and cleaning. Nothing has been done.

Official Indifference

In a political system where the State controls and guides almost all public interests and activities and many aspects of the citizen's private life, inevitably it must also accept the responsibility for its failings in the matters I have mentioned above. The failings are, unfortunately, many.

The archives are defective, incomplete and poorly managed and maintained. They are administered by a branch of the bureaucracy, and therefore suffer from all the defects associated with the departments of government in an undemocratic Thid World country run by, and for the pleasure of, the official machinery. Just as other departments are unheedful of the needs of the common citizen, the one dealing with archives is, besides being inefficient and a victim of redtapeism, neglectful of the requirements and demands of the scholar. This indifference is rooted partly in the usual arrogance of every official functionary and partly in the ignorance of the ways of dealing with an educated and sensitive part of the educated classes. The research scholar is treated as someone begging official favours rather than one seeking information with a view to writing national history. His convenience is not considered, his inquiries are answered perfunctorily, and his letters are rarely acknowledged. No self-respecting historian, even of junior standing, will pay a second visit to a place where the clerks treat him as an applicant and the officers are too busy to treat him in any manner.

Several years ago the Federal Cabinet Division set up an office in Lahore (why Lahore?) which was charged with the task of selecting from the holdings of the India Office Library and Records such documents and papers as were of special interest or use to Pakistan (or the Government of Pakistan?), arranging the

photocopying or microfilming of them, receiving them in Lahore, and looking after them. Apparently the depository has been established to suit the convenience of the civil servants (do they embark upon any such thing as research?), not to make essential records available to the scholar. Its origins were bureaucratic, not academic. At no stage has any scholar been associated with its administration or consulted in its setting up. In the past the material to be selected was left to the discretion and state of historical knowledge (?) of the officials who were sent to London for the purpose. One of them was Qudratullah Shahab, Secretary to the Ministry of Education, and another was Ibn-i-Insha, an Urdu poet and prose-writer. Both were posted in London on compassionate grounds: the former to be with his ailing wife and the latter to receive medical treatment. I don't know who succeeded them. Most probably the job has since been done by someone on the staff of the Pakistan High Commission in London. The Lahore office is headed by a Deputy Secretary of the Federal Government. My inquiries about access to its contents were treated as if I was trying to pry into the activities and functions of a secret bureau.

But I did have one contact, from a distance, with its administration which is worth mentioning. The centre issues a bulletin containing a list of its new acquisitions (without any annotation), some general news items and a few book reviews. In the winter of 1987-88 it published a short review of my *A History of the Idea of Pakistan*. A friend brought it to my notice, and on reading it I found that the year of publication of my book was given as 1887 instead of 1987. I rang up the centre and a lady spoke to me. The following exchange of words took place:

Self: Your bulletin carries a review of my book in which the year of publication is wrongly given . . .

Lady: Are you sure?

Self: It is lying before me as I speak to you. It says 1887. The book was published in 1987.

Lady: It may be a misprint.

Self: May I speak to the Director?

Lady: (With contempt in her voice) There is no Director. We have a Deputy Secretary.

Self: All right, may I speak to the Deputy Secretary?

Lady: He is busy in an important meeting. Why do you want to talk to him?

Self: I think he should know that the date of publication of the book being reviewed has been given incorrectly and the error should be put right in the next issue of the Bulletin.

Lady: I am in charge of the Bulletin.

Self: Oh! Then I am speaking to the right person.

Lady: Sure you are.

Self: Then please make this correction.

Lady: Why do you attach so much importance to it?

Self: Well, because such an error ought to be notified and rectified.

Lady: Every reader will know that the book is a recent publication without our telling him so.

Self: But what you have told him is that it was published in 1887?

Lady: I am very busy. Do you really think the matter is so important?

Self: Let me tell you something else. You know several publishing houses of Lahore have in recent years reprinted scores of old historical works, sometimes giving the original date of publication without the year of the reprint. Some of your readers might think that this too is an old book.

Lady: I will see what I can do.

Self: Can't you promise that the mistake will be pointed out in the next issue?

Lady: I will place the matter before the Deputy Secretary, or you can ring again to find out if he is free and then talk to him.

Self: Please take down my telephone number and ask the Deputy Secretary to ring me when he has finished with the meeting he is holding.

Lady: He is a very busy man. You must ring him yourself.

Self: Thank you.

This is an exact record of the dialogue, for I wrote it down in my journal immediately after it ended. I could not check if the

correction was made in the following issue, because the Bulletin is not for sale or public circulation. Had my friend not brought that particular issue to me I would not have known that my book had been reviewed in it.

The Departments of Archives in the Centre and in the provinces have not published detailed and annotated catalogues of their holdings. Nor has this been done by the Archives of the Freedom Movement, which contain the All India Muslim League papers. If such catalogues are in existence, they must be intended for official or restricted circulation, for I have not seen them at any bookshop or in any library in Europe that I have visited. Nor has any of the archives published selections from their holdings.

I have mentioned above some of the reasons which make it difficult for the historian to consult the archives: official bad manners, ignorance, redtapeism, insufficiency of what is available, carelessness and lack of consideration for the needs of the scholar. To this list of mere inadequacies must be added what can best be called a disease. The bureaucracy suffers from "secretitus". Here I can speak from the years of my experience in the Government on the highest level. Generally speaking, *all* information in the possession of a civil servant is automatically deemed confidential; except what the government is pleased to release through its blue books and white papers. The citizen not employed in any official capacity has no *right* to this information. (The fact that much of it is available to you if you know well somebody high enough is another matter). Everything that can be of any possible use to a civil servant is immediately marked "Secret" on the unquestioned and unquestionable principle that the government cannot share its knowledge with its citizens.

Officers and clerks alike are fond of decorating their files with flags, arranging the matter in an ascending hierarchy of important, confidential, very confidential, extremely confidential, top confidential, secret, very secret, extremely secret, top secret, for eyes only (I may have missed some other indicators measuring out the size of the lock to be put on a file). The make-believe goes on and the game is played to the end. The patriotic, innocent citizen finds himself barred from this storehouse of innocuous but heavily-guarded facts and figures without the use of which he cannot be told his own history. But foreign agents can get hold of the most sensitive documents in the official hold and publish it abroad (the top-secret

Hamood-ur-Rahman Report on the 1971 East Pakistan war was published in the United States in 1988). On the other hand, in the same year, a Pakistani university professor teaching at a Pakistani university, wanting to write a life of Jinnah, was denied the privilege of looking at, not to speak of consulting or quoting, the Governor General's and Cabinet's papers of 1947-48. He abandoned the project of preparing a biography of the father of the nation. In New Delhi the Government of India put all its papers at the disposal of Dr. S. Gopal to enable him to write the life of Jawaharlal Nehru.

I myself went through a laughable but extremely irritating experience when in the summer of 1988 I went to the Deputy Commissioner of Abbottabad with the request that I be given copies of various old and new maps of Hazara because I wanted to visit, explore and study the area with a view to writing a book on this beautiful part of my country. The official was polite but very firm on the point that all the maps in his office, which he had no hesitation in showing me, were classified material and therefore beyond my access. When I reminded him that, by just writing a letter to the India Office Library, I could get copies in any size of all the pre-1947 maps of the area, and, by a similar communication addressed to the American Geographical Society, receive the most detailed and enlarged maps of Hazara, he smiled and said that he was bound by the orders of the government and could be of no help to me.

Now, maps are as essential to a historian as chemicals are to a chemist. Without their aid history can neither be understood nor taught nor written nor read. By declaring them secret, the government is making sure that our students don't know their country and our historians cannot illustrate history through geography. It should not surprise anyone that a respectable atlas of Pakistan is yet to be prepared. Do we wait until the National Assembly passes a law releasing national maps from the prison where they have been rotting without a trial and without any charges brough against them? They are undoubtedly the longest serving detainees under the Security Act!

Records, documents, papers and maps are of primary use to the scholar alone, but museums serve a broader purpose and cater to a larger audience than do the archives. Most museums do in fact also contain records and maps and manuscripts in addition to objects and articles of historical interest. Many kinds of people visit these places: scholars, research workers, journalists, authors, school

students and common citizens. Some go there to work or write, some to seek information, some to have a peep into their past, some to view beautiful objects of art, some to enjoy the sight of rare things. A museum which is not equipped or run to offer all these things to its visitors does not justify its name or its existence.

There are no private museums in Pakistan (with the single but magnificent exception of the Faqir family collection in Lahore); and it is the government, federal or provincial, which has chosen to shoulder the responsibility for the creation and maintenance of all kinds of museums. Its performance is hardly an achievement. There are only three museums, the national in Karachi and one each in Lahore and Peshawar, which may be said to carry out some of the functions associated with their names. But they are poorly organized, badly arranged and inefficiently run. The staff is unqualified. The contents are small in number and low in quality. The visitor, professional or general, is not made welcome, nor is he supplied with guides, information booklets, or satisfactory reproductions of the exhibits. The lighting up of the objects makes viewing a strain on the eyes. The galleries are not aesthetically planned or arranged. Inquiries from the visiting public are either not answered or are discouraged. Apart from the poverty of the holdings, it is the absence of courtesy and helpfulness that takes away all the pleasure of entering and spending a few hours in the company of our and other people's past.

We don't have local, municipal or regional museums, nor specialized ones of, say, anthropology, ethnology, tribal life, folk art, handicrafts, former native states, education, agriculture, art, area studies, etc., nor any museums at the universities. Two omissions in this field are incomprehensible: Islam and national history. With so much talk about Islam and so many official and unofficial claims about Pakistan being a "fortress of Islam" (how true are these claims in a different sense: Islam is in an impregnable prison in Pakistan with the key of the dungeon with the *mulla*!), there is no museum of Islamic studies, culture, history or art. If nothing else is possible, we could have collected printed books, good reproductions and photographs, and other secondary material copied from the holdings of dozens of European and American museums whose riches have to be seen to be believed. An American or a German or a Russian has opportunities of studying Islam which are denied to us. A Pakistani has to be wealthy as well as cultured (an extremely rare

combination) to be able to travel several thousand miles to see his own religious heritage (that is, if he is allowed to travel).

The second gap is even more astonishing. All of us are apparently so devoted to our nationalist past and the Pakistan movement that we cannot tolerate even a critical study of them. Equally seemingly, we are so busy in singing their praises that we cannot spare any time or money for a museum of history. Had this love for modern history not been a mere pretence, by now we should have had a museum of the All India Muslim League, another of the Pakistan movement, another of Jinnah, and a few more illustrating and recalling important events and personalities. Instead, we have a void with history lying somewhere amid its sombre depths.

What accounts for this negligence? For one, the museum world is ruled by the "cultural bureaucracy" of the country: the various ministries, divisions and departments which make and implement national policies on art, archaeology, education, universities, science, technology and research, in one word, on our culture. Secondly, the museums are run by civil servants, not by scholars. There may be, strictly as a formality, an advisory board or committee; but it rarely tenders good advice and more rarely is the advice accepted. There are one or two cases of a university professor getting associated with some archaeological decision-making or an educationist obtaining a senior appointment in the Ministry of Culture (yes, we have a Ministry of that title!), but the taste of power and the civil service *milieu* soon drag him down to the level of the bureaucrat. One museum is headed by a long superannuated C.S.P. officer.

Thirdly, there is the universal excuse of a paucity of funds. The museums may plead it with some justification, but the governments cannot. A country which spends nearly half of its total revenues on maintaining its armed forces, a lot of money on the salaries, residences, perquisites and foreign visits of a few hundred senior civil servants, and a good percentage of its budget on paying interest on the huge amounts borrowed supposedly to develop the country, is not in a position to claim that it has no money for the museums.

The unfortunate fact is that the nation is not interested in culture and history, of which museums are repositories and manifestations. We are not a museum-going people, not even in the major cities. In the West every schoolboy and schoolgirl has visited,

more than once, every museum in the town and probably a larger one in the nearest city. If all the schools of Lahore were to send even some of their students once a year to the local museum, there would be a crowd jostling outside the building. I have never seen even a trickle. And then there are about one hundred thousand college students in the city, and a few thousand lecturers, and a few hundred university dons, and a couple of hundred journalists and a few dozen scholars, and nearly five million inhabitants. How many people enter the museum every day? And what is there to attract them?

The easiest and quickest way to make a people conscious of their history is to lure them into museums, where they can trace their origins and development in concrete objects — coins, clothes, statues, armour, articles of daily use, paintings, pieces of calligraphy, manuscripts, photographs, furniture, utensils — and see the caravan of history moving in the perspective of time. Young minds and old alike are fascinated by the panorama, the bustle of things, the ancient relics springing to life, the *objets d'art* of another age conveying their message of a beauty that never dies, the little things from folk heritage which make our cultural past come alive as no book or lecture can, the script and the ink and the paper and the binding of a manuscript which, planned and written a thousand years ago, contains the philosophy and the beliefs and the convictions by which we try to order our lives today. Such treasures have no end, and their capacity to inspire the human mind is for ever. A visit to the museum is the most painless method of learning history. Have we made up our mind not to employ any method, with or without pain?

Next to the archives and the museum, it is the library which can supply to the historian what he needs. There are no private public libraries in Pakistan (for example, one like the London Library). All libraries are established, funded, controlled and run by the government. The librarians and the staff are civil servants or armed forces' officers (serving or retired), and behave like them.

The holdings of the libraries are inadequate even for general purposes, not to speak of specialized research. There is no national copyright library where everything published since 1947 is available. The scholar has to run from one library to another, sometimes from one city to another, in search of what he requires, and often fails to lay his hands on it. The corpus of primary printed material on modern Indian history is missing from all libraries: census reports,

gazetteers, settlement reports, administration reports, command papers, legislative proceedings, yearbooks, atlases, and official reviews and surveys. All these are readily available in most British libraries and some European and American collections. No librarian has thought of obtaining their photocopies from abroad. With a little proper planning and without incurring much expenditure, and spreading the exercise over the last forty years, by now we would have had at least one central collection containing most of the basic, essential, official source material. This was not done. On the contrary, some libraries have destroyed old publications on one excuse or another. One librarian was seen ordering and supervising the burning of a heap of Thacker's Directories of India, an extremely rare item, because, as he put it, the old volumes would disfigure his new fine library. He stated blandly on another occasion that his selection of the books to be purchased was determined by the attractiveness of their dust-jackets.

Newspapers are an authentic source for contemporary and recent history. For Muslim India, they constitute the only reliable record of day-to-day occurrences and political statements because Muslim leaders and public men failed to write their autobiographies and left no journals or diaries. In order to trace their careers we have only the newspapers to rely upon. No history of Muslim India from say 1880 onwards can be written without using such newspapers as *Muhammadi, Moslem Chronicle, Punjab Observer, Al-Hilal, Al-Balagh, Hamdard, Siasat, Al-Jamiat, Mustaqil, Khilafat, Manshur, Star of India, The New Times, The Eastern Times, Dawn*, and a score of other Muslim papers. This material has to be supplemented with the outstanding non-Muslim press, at the least with *The Englishman, Madras Mail, The Times of India, The Statesman* and *The Civil and Military Gazette* on the British side, and with *The Hindu, The Hindustan Times* and *The Tribune* on the Hindu side. This list indicates the minimum requirements of the historian. Further afield, depending on the area or region or theme of research, the careful scholar would like to scan some Bengali, Hindi, Gujerati and Telugu newspapers.

Our libraries have made no efforts to salvage whatever was available in Pakistan and to preserve it. The state of the few volumes of *Paisa Akhbar* lying in the Punjab Public Library of Lahore is pitiable. A good portion of what we need could have been obtained from the Indian collections on the microfilm. The gaps could then be

filled with help from the British Library Newspaper Depository and some American libraries specializing on India. As our modern history forms a part of British history, the leading newspapers of Britain are as relevant as those of the subcontinent. If a respectable newspaper collection is to be built up we must get the full runs of *The Times, The Morning Post, The Daily Telegraph, The Manchester Guardian, The Glasgow Herald, The Yorkshire Post* and *The Daily Herald. All* of them can be easily had on microfilm at the cost of *two* army tanks. Pakistan has no newspaper collections covering its own pre- or post-1947 period. There are a few small, odd collections or brief runs of certain newspapers at some places, but they are scattered and of limited utility. Even for the post-1947 period, no library subscribes to and preserves the leading English and Urdu daily press. The value of buying and keeping a few selected Indian and British newspapers has not even been considered.

What I have said above about the indispensability of newspapers for the political and social historian is doubly true of the journals and magazines which appeared in India between 1850 and 1947. In politics we cannot do without *The Comrade* and several Urdu and Bengali magazines. In cultural and social history (religion, education, literature, language, philosophy) who among us dare write anything without reading what was published in *The Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq, The Aligarh Institute Gazette,* the several organs put forth by the Deoband school from time to time, *Al-Nadwa, Al-Jamiat, Urdu-i-Mualla, Saqi, Adb-i-Latif, Nairang-i-Khyal, Adabi Duniya, Hazar Dastan, Ruman, Humayun, Sidq, Sach*, about a score of various *Punchs* appearing from so many places, and a host of others in Urdu, Persian and Arabic, and the important Bengali Muslim journals?

I don't think a complete file of any of these is available in any Pakistani library; even short runs are rare. Some of them are just names for our historians, particularly for the younger ones who haven't seen a single issue with their own eyes. Here again, the problem of acquiring them is not insoluble. One method is to try to get as many of them as possible in the original, reprint or microfilm, from our own private collelctions, second-hand book dealers and the libraries which have some files, or from Indian sources which are far richer than ours. The other method, more practicable, cheaper, easier and more useful for the research worker, is to select the articles relevant to our requirements and acquire them in photocopy

from wherever they are available. Nothing has been attempted in this direction.

Like the daily newspaper the British quality journals contained a vast amount of material essential to our own history, and the bulk of it was the work of former or serving Anglo-Indians and other experts on India, thus augmenting the worth and usefulness of their contents. The *Edinburgh Review*, the *Quarterly Review*, the *Asiatic Review*, the *Nineteenth Century*, the *National Review*, the *Political Quarterly*, the *New Statesman* and *The Nation*, *The Economist*, the *Time and Tide* and *The Listener*, among themselves, carried hundreds of articles on India by leading authorities and expressed the views of all political parties and groups. As far as I know, none of these has been reprinted, and it is impossible to acquire the originals. The only practicable way of making them available to our historians is to extract from their files all the articles on India and obtain their photocopies from London. To this I would add a similar selection of all debates and questions asked and answered on India from *Hansard*, the official proceedings of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Once all the material — relevant records from the India Office Library, all official reports and proceedings, newspapers and journals (or selections from them) — has been received, it should be placed in one central depository in Islamabad (not in the government archives), which should be a national institution staffed by trained scholars and administered by a group of leading historians. Our scholars need not balk the prospect of running this treasure-house of historical knowledge, nor should they worry about their status. In civilized countries it is an honour for a scholar to be a librarian. Many European libraries are headed by well-known scholars, and in France and Germany it is not unusual to find the librarian of an institute a Doctor of Philosophy in one of the main disciplines and the author of several books. All the keepers and assistant keepers at the British Museum and their counterparts at the Bibliotheque Nationale are recognized authorities in their fields and some of them are scholars of international reputation. Pakistani historians should have no fear of losing caste.

After the establishment of this collection of source material, every provincial library (of which there should be one) and every general university in the country should be encouraged to get copies

of what they require from the central depository, and funds for this purpose should be budgeted on a continuous long-term basis.

To see such a storehouse of historical source material has been my desire for many years. I must confess that, looking around, I find the desire dissolving into a fancy which even the coming generations may not be able to translate into a reality. But there is no harm in dreaming such dreams. It is better than longing for the next grade and praying for the grant of an extension in service—which is all that our professors seem to be doing.

Private Neglect

So far I have been considering the hurdles put in the path of the historian by the State, the Government, the officialdom and the universities. Their collective assault on the perseverance, courage and nerves of the historian is strong enough to kill all incentive, enthusiasm and scholarly ambition. But the historian has still more enemies to face who add to his professional difficulties and problems.

For reasons mentioned at an earlier place, the ordinary educated Pakistani has lost interest in all serious reading or writing. He still reads popular literature in the shape of romantic fiction and political commentary of a low order appearing in the Urdu newspapers, weeklies and digests. The not-so-ordinary Pakistanis, the so-called elite, whose sitting-room bookcase sports a few American paperbacks and whose children speak English among themselves, read *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines and a couple of Pakistani English-language dailies. Both groups are equally allergic to sophisticated reading. It is my observation that history is one subject in which they have no interest at all.

Entertaining this attitude towards their past, these people are naturally unaware of the importance and value of the material which can be of any possible use to the historian. In the last thirty years I have talked to dozens of members of the "political" families of Pakistan, whose fathers or uncles or brothers were active in the mainstream of national or provincial politics in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, and some of whom are themselves closely related to important politicians of the present day. All of them told me that they had no letters or other records relating to the family's public life. To my question if they preserved their current correspondence, or at least the valuable part of it, they said "no". I have no reason to

suspect that they were lying to me, except in one case, in which a lady politician swore that all the papers of her father had been destroyed long ago, and a few years later she published a book using and quoting from these papers.

Apart from the general indifference to history, I think there are three factors which explain this failure to preserve or show family papers.

The first is the general habit of neglect. As a nation we are not used to taking care of material things. (There is a paradox here which only a psychiatrist can explain: the Pakistani is acquisitive, loves his possessions, wants to increase them, and therefore runs after money, but he does not maintain in good shape what he has). We spend 2-3 million rupees on building a house for our own use; within a few years the paint begins to run, the flush system does not work, the electric wiring deteriorates, the kitchen ceiling is black with smoke and soot, the doors and windows don't fit, the pictures hanging on the wall are askew, and the driveway has pot-holes. No repairs are done. We buy a new motor car worth half a million and then refuse to take it for regular servicing; in five years it looks 20-year old. Look at our roads, post offices, banks, government buildings, schools, electric wires hanging loose from lamp posts, shopping centres — all show a uniform state of disrepair, ugliness and misuse.

We treat our books and papers with the same disregard (and teach our children to show the same lack of care towards their textbooks). How can we expect a family of this society to look after its letters and heirlooms. Correspondence is dealt with on the spot and in a summary fashion. The incoming letter is read and then torn to pieces right away; if it has to be answered, it has the same end when the reply has been written. Copies of outgoing mail are not made. Old papers lying about the house, even old books and magazines, are thrown away regularly as unwanted trash.

The second factor is an obsessive fear that the private papers will be used by the historian, now or in the future, to bring a bad name to the person or the family. In some cases this feeling has a substantial and genuine basis of truth. This is where current politics and the prejudice of the "nationalist" historian combine to create the fear. I have met a number of people who were either in the front rank of the anti-Pakistan Movement parties in the 1940s or had a great deal of inside and first-hand information about the political

developments of those days. All of them said that they were not prepared to write anything or share their knowledge with me or grant me access to their records, on the simple ground that they did not want to revive their "anti-national" past and thus expose themselves to criticism and abuse and charges of disloyalty to the nation. One of them, a founding-father of the Punjab National Unionist Party, even rejected my suggestion that he should write a history of the party to be published after his demise (he is a very old man), by saying in Punjabi, "*Tusi log te meri qabar te wi juttian maroge*" ("You people will even then belabour my grave with shoes" — in the Punjabi idiom, it is the ultimate way of insulting a dead Yperson). This spontaneous remark reflects faithfully a general apprehension. (What is really difficult to understand is the reluctance of the old Muslim Leaguers to afford us even a peep into their personal correspondence. What dreadful prospects haunt their conscience we can't tell, for it seems to be even more inaccessible than their correspondence).

The last factor is an exaggerated sense of privacy. A letter or a property deed or a record of litigation or a personal communication is considered a thing of such private nature that it can't be shown to an outsider. This is like undressing in public. In oriental societies, many aspects of life are treated as secrets to be guarded. A letter is an intimate and frank communication between two persons, in which the most private affairs may be discussed or remarks made about a third person which would never be uttered even in a conversation. A diary is even a more private and completely open dialogue between the writer and his heart and mind. How can these innermost thoughts and private opinions be made the subject matter of public knowledge and debate through the work and words of a historian?

And yet, letters and diaries have been made public, even published. We have many letters available in collections and editions of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Shibli Naumani, Muhammad Ali, Iqbal and others. Some of them deal only with their private lives or family affairs. Some diaries have seen the light of day, e.g., Muhammad Ali's and Mian Fazl-i-Hussain's. They tell us much about the man which would have died with him but for these publications. But the ordinary Pakistani does not appreciate this value of what he destroys or hides away. This exaggerated, perverse and abnormal sense of privacy is responsible for the permanent loss of hundreds of

thousands of letters, each of which would have been a boon to the historian. In the bulk, they would have enriched our history and in many cases changed our estimates of those who made it. With them has died, for ever, a whole world of contemporary, authentic, detailed and unique view of what happened and why. Every person who refuses to part with such a paper is an accessory to the assassination of his own history.

CHAPTER 2

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE: THE VIEW OF THE PAST

Every unfavourable impact of history and geography, instead of being palliated and countered, was enlarged, magnified and aggravated by the manner in which politics was conducted (probably "played" is a truer description) in Pakistan. And to this I now turn.

The formal reality that the All India Muslim League had been the sole creator of Pakistan was turned into a verity of religious proportions, a dogma, a spiritual truth, a belief which was decreed to be the national faith. The Pakistan Muslim League, the official successor to the All India Muslim League, retained its vigour, popularity, standing and reputation for only a few months after August 1947. Even before Jinnah's death in September 1948 murmurs of resentment were heard. The ineptitude of the Punjab administration, the dictatorial rule of Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan in the NWFP, the far too quick changes rung on the political scene of Sind, the failure of Baluchistan to win the status of a province, the swiftly spreading corruption in the official machinery, and other similar phenomena made some people wonder if the new national ("our own") government stood up to their expectations. In East Pakistan the resentment was greater and more visible after Jinnah's public and firm pronouncements made there that Urdu shall be the *only* national language.

With Jinnah's death, which occurred in suspicious cricumstances, power passed on to Liaquat Ali Khan, who was not

even a second-rate politician. Wider protests were now heard on the tongues of men. The smaller provinces espied a Punjab-U.P. clique ruling over them with leaping ambitions and mounting inefficiency. The discontent in East Pakistan started its long journey to secession. One half of the total membership of the national legislature, which also served as a constituent assembly, were appointed federal ministers, deputy ministers, ministers of state, provincial governors, and ambassadors. The vacancies were filled in by indirect elections and nominations. The assembly's sessions grew more and more infrequent. The work of constitution making grinded to a virtual halt.

This state of affairs signalled a falling out among the leaders of the League. Several of them left it to establish their own independent parties (Nawab Iftikhar Husain Khan of Mamdot, Pir of Manki Sharif, M. A. Khuro and, the best of them, H.S. Suhrawardy). Others transferred their allegiance to other older or newer groups. The assassination of Liaquat Ali Khan in October 1951 resulted in a change of (some) faces, but none in realities. Khwaja Nazimuddin descended from the Governor General's throne (which he had occupied since Jinnah's death) to the Prime Minister's chair. The Finance Minister, Malik Ghulam Muhammad, a Punjabi and a former civil servant, became the Governor General. He lost no time in proving that he was capable of combining in his clever hands the authority of the past Viceroys of India and the powers enjoyed by Jinnah in his time. The operation was smooth, swift and easy. The Muslim League majority in the Parliament recommended his name to the British Queen, the Head of the Commonwealth, because the politicians found it profitable to float (they did not know how to swim) with the current, because the bureaucracy was pleased to have one of them as its boss, because the new Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, General Ayub Khan, who was the first Pakistani to hold the appointment, promised to favour the change, and because the people of the country did not care any more who lorded over them and how.

Ghulam Muhammad did many things which were of dubious constitutional sanction and of assured undemocratic nature. He dismissed the Prime Minister who still had the support of a majority in the assembly, and replaced him with his personal choice: Muhammad Ali Bogra, Pakistan's ambassador in the United States. The Muslim League parliamentary party which had been the loyal constituency of Nazimuddin the day before gave its unanimous

backing to Bogra the day after. He dissolved the National Assembly, and his action was declared to be lawful by the Federal Court and later upheld by the Muslim League party in the successor Parliament. He formed a new Cabinet which included the Commander-in-Chief. The Muslim League did not protest. He dismissed several provincial governments because they were not prepared to translate into law his desire to abolish all the provinces of West Pakistan and convert the wing into "one unit". In every province the dismissed League chief minister was dropped, and the fresh nominee of the Governor General accepted, by the League assembly party. In 1954 fresh elections were held in East Bengal in which the Muslim League was wiped out of existence, yet the party continued to rule at the centre.

The important point is that throughout these years of the sovereignty of the will of one man the Muslim League carried out his instructions to the letter, obeyed his orders with pleasure and met his wishes as if it were the destined purpose of its existence. No Muslim League leader registered his protest or resigned his office or walked out of the party. The League continued to live happily with its conscience and with the masterful Governor General. Its heart was untroubled, its brow unruffled, its soul at peace with itself. The party had been turned into a concubine, and it made merry with its new possessor.

When the Lord of the Muslim League decided, or was persuaded, to leave the scene his reins were handed over to a General in mufti — Iskander Mirza. The new rider cracked his whip harder and more frequently, and enjoyed the gallop. When the West Pakistan Muslim League chief minister refused to kotow to the new big chief (had his mind refused to function!) Mirza ordered the instant creation of a new party. The debutante appeared, well endowed, in good health, wreathed in smiles. The new Republican Party, for that was the name the royal maiden was given, counted in its fold in the assembly a large majority of what was the Muslim League strength a few days earlier. The horseman had not changed horses; the horse wore new colours. To change the metaphor, the Lord of the Manor had given his domestic staff a new livery, which the servants flaunted with pride and glee. Thus are strong men made stronger in their strongholds by the smallness of small minds and the weakness of weak hearts. The General in mufti indulged his pleasure until a General in uniform conquered his domain, captured his castle

and exiled him to a distant land. The childish games the Muslim League had been playing were at an end — but this was by no means the end of the Muslim League. It was fated to be mounted again and again and again, changing its colours, its owners, its masters, its jockeys, its courses, even its race tracks.

The General who had overthrown the first constitution the country had managed to draw up in nine years meant business far more thoroughly than his predecessor. Ayub Khan had been planning since 1954 to take over the country. Now in 1958 he made arrangements for a long, long stay in power. He did not want to be a transient ruler, a passing show, like his predecessor, with constraints and trammels, obliged to bribe, buy, cajole, blackmail and threaten the politicians, forced to waste his time and energy on palace intrigues and sordid conspiracies, and compelled to instigate and inspire the formation of new parties. The first thing he did was to promote himself a Field Marshal, of course on the insistence of his hand-picked Cabinet which contained several Generals. For a few years he ruled with a drawn sword, with no opposition, no shackles, no accountability, and without precedents, laws or institutions. He condemned democracy openly, called the politicians a menace to the nation, and branded all political parties as unnecessary, superfluous and subversive. He even dabbled in political philosophy. First he proclaimed in all seriousness that democracy was unsuited to lands with a hot climate, thus pretending to be counted as the Montesquieu of Asia. Then he relented and, aping Plato (had he really heard of the Greek?), laid down the political principle that the citizens of Pakistan were children in need of a guiding hand. On the welcome advice of Shaikh Manzur Qadir, a leading lawyer of the country and a Punjabi, he constructed a tiered system of "basic democracies", in which indirectly elected representatives enjoyed the illusion of some power under the supervision of the civil servants. He gave the country a new constitution, dictated by himself and drafted by Manzur Qadir.

Once the new system was in place and a parliament elected, Ayub changed his mind (but not his low opinion) about political parties. He was now a political ruler, in theory if not in practice, not a Chief Martial Law Administrator in conditions of a state of siege. One fine morning he decided to have a political party of his own. The Muslim League arose from its ashes to become his handmaiden. Long years of practice had taught it the fine art of playing the role of

a courtesan with aplomb. Quickly an official Muslim League was created, and Ayub agreed in the generosity of his heart to become its president. The government in office was converted into a Muslim League administration, many old Muslim Leaguers, with happy memories of worshipping every rising sun and profiting personally from the act of obeisance, flocked to the incarnation. Ayub declared his Muslim League to be the direct and genuine continuation of Jinnah's Muslim League with the same principles and the same devotion to the good of Pakistan. His followers applauded him as if the Quaid-i-Azam had been reborn. A few among the old guard, whom Ayub had neglected or not offered sufficient inducements, called a meeting and formed a rival Muslim League, claiming for it the good name of Jinnah's achievements and legacy, and calling the official Muslim League a usurper and a pretender. The taunts did not trouble Ayub's tranquillity of mind. He was himself a usurper and a pretender. But did it behove the rival Muslim League to claim virtues which it had lost, repeatedly, willingly and gleefully, at the hands of Liaquat, Ghulam Muhammad and Iskander Mirza? Both the Muslim Leagues were strumpets, but in different conditions. One sat on a cushion of gold and brocade and fawned upon the new Mughal, dancing to his tune, singing his praises, meeting his desires more than half way, fulfilling his wishes, jumping to his orders. It combined the roles of a courtesan and a court jester. The emperor saw that it performed its functions well, and he was pleased. The other Muslim League, unofficial, unrecognised, unsung, lived like an ex-favourite, a rejected first wife, a woman with faded charms, fallen on hard days, with few customers inclined to purchase her soiled favours. Both had lost their moral sense and self-respect, but both talked incessantly of their glorious act of having brought Pakistan to birth, of their resolve to continue Jinnah's mission, of their undivided devotion to the ideology of Pakistan (whatever that meant), and of their determination to stand no nonsense from other parties. The show went on.

Ayub had come into power through the barrel of his gun. He was pushed out of it through the barrel of another General's gun. Yahya Khan, the Commander-in-Chief, forced Ayub to resign and to transfer power to him, thus controverting the written constitution. The country was once again put under Martial Law for nearly three years. During this spell of the rule of the soldiery East Pakistan seceded from the federation, after much bloodshed and in

unparalleled humiliation of Pakistan throughout the world. In the last elections held in the old Pakistan there were not two but four Muslim Leagues in the field, each claiming to be the sole child and heir of the All India Muslim League. In East Pakistan the party did not win any seat. In the West all the Muslim Leagues put together managed a handful of seats. One of the Leagues (the property of Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan of the NWFP) joined the government of the Pakistan People's Party led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The others went on bickering over one another's right to be the real Muslim League. By 1977 there was a rich exhibition of Muslim League models: Qayyum Muslim League, Khwaja Khairuddin Muslim League, Pir Pagara Muslim League, plus a few yet smaller versions of the standard models.

On 5 July 1977, General Ziaul Huq, the Chief of the Army Staff, who owed much, including his out-of-turn promotion to full Generalship, to Bhutto, demonstrated his own way of showing his gratitude by overthrowing his benefactor's government and pulling the country back into the longest and the darkest period of Martial Law. His "achievements" included an act of treason (as defined by the Constitution in force), the hanging of the Prime Minister, the alienation from Islam of a majority of the people through the draconian imposition of his personal version of Islam which had little sanction in the Quran, a complete depreciation of political and moral values in the country, unprecedented corruption in all fields including the armed forces (when you bring the soldiers into politics and administration and give them unlimited and unchallengeable authority and keep them there for over eight years, all but the most exceptional among them are bound to follow the bureaucracy and the businessmen into the cesspool of dishonesty), widespread drug addiction among the young and not so young, an unequalled steep fall in the standards of education, a demoralization of the higher judiciary, introduction of brutality in law, untrammelled freedom to the trader and the industrialist to exploit the common man, the creation of several avenues of making black money and then the making of new laws to whiten the ill-begotten gains, the complete denial of all human and fundamental rights and liberties to all who were not his supporters, the contempt he tried to create in the Pakistani mind for all varieties of politicians, and finally the imposition on the country of one carefully selected model of the Muslim League.

The last two points concern us here. In the beginning Zia expressed his contempt for all kinds of politics, politicians and political parties in such harsh, uncompromising and irrational terms that Ayub Khan's strictures now seemed to have been a compliment. Zia condemned political parties as un-Islamic. He rejected the parliamentary system of government as irreligious and heretical. He pronounced, in carefully chosen and precise words, that as the Muslims believed in one God, one Book and one Prophet, they also favoured one Leader — the clear meaning being that Islam prescribed a dictatorship which endowed the Amir with unlimited powers but no accountability to any human being. He himself is on record in print and on tape as having said a dozen times that it was Divine will that had sent him to save Pakistan from disaster, that for his policies and actions he was responsible to God alone, and that he was determined to stay in power till what he had started in 1977 had reached its completion. A more perverse and unlicensed interpretation of Islamic political theory is impossible to contemplate and hard to find in Muslim history or tradition. Holding such views on a religion whose Prophet was "the Messenger of Mercy", what could be expected from Zia in the field of human relationship?

In the summer of 1978, in an interview to the Iranian *Kayhan International*, he said that he had no respect for the politicians of Pakistan. "When I whistle, they follow me with their tails wagging." It could not have occurred to him that, apart from the obscenity of such a remark, the making of it in a foreign newspaper by the ruler of a State on its leaders was the ultimate insult heaped upon his own country. Even stranger was the reaction of the men thus libelled. There was no protest, not even a squeak, from them. Correction. There was one squeak. Sardar Sherbaz Mazari, a minor politician, issued a statement condemning Zia's outburst. Most of the newspapers did not carry it. (For the benefit of and full understanding by the foreign readers of this narration, it must be pointed out that in all Muslim societies, and especially in Pakistan, and even among the non-Muslims of the subcontinent, to call someone a dog, even to liken him to the animal, is a filthy abuse the indecency of which is not tolerated even by the uncultured masses.)

Did the politicians deserve this vulgar abuse? It seems that they did. Soon after this incident, Zia appealed to the politicians to support and help him in running the country, and invited all the

political parties except the Pakistan People's Party (whose existence he believed to be against the precepts of Islam) to enter his government. The invitation was promptly accepted. Most of the parties, including some of the Muslim League groups, joined the Cabinet. And, why should this not have happened? In April-July 1977 all these parties had conspired with Zia to start a campaign against Bhutto's government and had been equal partners with the army in the *coup* that followed. The crumbs of power now thrown to them from the dictator's table were the rewards of their role in the *coup*. He had not called them dogs for nothing. They enjoyed the spoils. What was an abuse or two between friends? What they did not realize was that Zia was not repaying them, but using them, just as he had done before the *coup*. Once Bhutto had been hanged, Zia gave them the *conge*, thus making them a party to the infamous judicial murder. It is relevant to recall that the major parties which responded to the usurper's call for help were the Muslim League and the two foremost Islamic organizations: the Jamaat-i-Islami and the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Islam. This was the first time that the Muslim League shared power with its two oldest political enemies — enemies which had, during the struggle for Pakistan, abused the League leadership and opposed the creation of the country which they were now given a chance to govern under the aegis of the army.

Later Zia set up a nominated consultative council (*Majlis-i-Shura*) to give his rule the *facade* of public participation. Over two dozen members were old Muslim Leaguers of Jinnah's time, including one of the senior-most journalists (Mian Muhammad Shafi, pseudonym: *Meem-Sheen*) and a former Professor of Persian and Principal of the Punjab University Oriental College (Muhammad Baqir). During these years one of the most important and powerful Ministers in Zia's Cabinet was Mahmud Haroon, a veteran Muslim Leaguer and the son of the highly-respected Sindhi Muslim League leader, Haji Sir Abdullah Haroon. His brother, Yusuf Haroon, who carried on his business in the United States, visited Pakistan frequently to advise Zia.

When the *Majlis-i-Shura* failed to provide the required figleaf to a naked dictatorship, Zia took two steps. First he got himself elected President of Pakistan through a referendum in which not only was voting a transparent fraud but a special Martial Law Order was issued interdicting any public statement asking the people to

boycott the polling. Then he ordered the election of a Parliament under Martial Law rules and on a non-party basis, and a *quid pro quo* was arranged by which Zia promised to release the country from Martial Law and the freshly-elected representatives of the people undertook to approve and pass, as their first duty, all the amendments which Zia had made single-handedly to the 1973 Constitution and which had altered the basic law of the land out of recognition. The promises were kept by both sides. At the same time Zia nominated a member of the lower house as Prime Minister designate and both the houses elected him *unanimously* to the office. The man thus honoured was Muhammad Khan Junejo, an old Muslim Leaguer from Sind, and a political and spiritual disciple of Pir Pagara who was then President of his own Muslim League. In the Pir's words the Muslim League had lent the services of Junejo to Zia. In this way a Muslim League government was installed under Zia, though in theory (which was now proved to be a myth) both the Parliament and the Government were non-party. The charade lasted a little while until Zia discovered, as Ayub had done before him, that a political non-party government was impossible. His belief in the un-Islamic nature of political parties notwithstanding, he asked the Parliament to enact a law recognizing and permitting the creation of parties in the legislature. Another Muslim League sprang into existence — an official bouncing baby, holding a sceptre in its pudgy fingers, born to rule. But Zia continued to believe in the evils inherent in a party system. The royal baby turned out to be a bastard.

In spite of Zia's loud disavowals of any interest in or connection with the Muslim League, after his death his proteges in all the provinces united to keep its flag flying. In the 1988 elections this Muslim League, under the joint leadership of Muhammad Khan Junejo of Sind and Mian Nawaz Sharif of the Punjab, joined hands with the Jamaat-i-Islami and some other groups to form an Islamic Democratic Alliance which fought the elections as one party. During and after the elections the Muslim League leadership in the Alliance continued to press the point that its principal goal was to complete the mission started by Zia and to burnish his legacy bright. Thus far the leaders of the party cannot be faulted, for every party has a perfect right to determine and define its goals. But we look in vain for any logic in the manifesto. The man whose legacy the party swore by and whose photographs appeared in its rallies was neither a

politician nor a Muslim Leaguer, nor even the pinkest democrat. He was a usurper, a violator of the country's constitution and laws, a dictator, a self-confessed enemy of all political parties, and the man who dismissed (unlawfully in the judgement of the courts) the government of the party which reveres him as its hero.

But the Junejo Muslim League goes further and claims that it is the party which created Pakistan, and therefore it alone possesses the qualifications and qualities required to safeguard the national ideology and to govern the country. Statements to this effect were made by Junejo and his lieutenants throughout the 1988 election campaign and after it. When the top leadership of a party which won enough seats in the country's biggest province to rule it presents these arguments, it must be taken seriously. The question to be answered is: do the leaders really believe that their party is a successor of the All India Muslim League? Philosophically speaking, a belief is different from a conviction. Belief is above reason and cannot be confronted with argument. Conviction is based on facts and can stand scrutiny. In a country with 20 per cent literacy and less than 1 per cent education, people allow their lives to be guided and governed by their beliefs, not by rational convictions. Behind a conviction lies an extended line of some observation, some reading, some use of the faculty of thinking, some philosophic (even pseudo-philosophic) speculation, some hard information, some idea of one's history. If this analysis is admitted to be true, an overwhelming majority of the electorate, a large majority of the literate, and at least half of the Urdu-newspaper readership cannot be said to have any convictions. Add to this the fact that more than one-half of the lives of Pakistanis has been lived under military rule or civilian dictatorship. Political convictions and views are born of political participation. In the absence of any opportunity of this, political convictions are replaced with either cynicism or slogans.

Therefore, when the Muslim League (of any label) presents its credentials to the voting or newspaper-reading public, it is confident of its immunity from interrogation. The ordinary village or small town voter's ignorance of everyday affairs is frightening, and even of popular history invincible. Who can blame him for the failing? With the current level of literacy and standard of school education what else should one expect? The semi- and half-educated Urdu newspaper reader of towns and cities knows what he reads in, or is recited to from, the daily press and the monthly digests. I have

read over one thousand articles on national history carried by these periodical publications, and have found that, rare exceptions apart, they are exercises in hagiography or inaccuracy, often in both. Hagiography is a long tradition in the East, encouraged in Muslim societies by the large number of venerators of saints, disciples of *pirs* and worshippers of shrines and tombs. Inaccuracy is the natural result of carelessness and ignorance. In combination they produce fairy tales and bedside stories.

For bringing up two generations of Pakistanis on this deleterious baby food the responsibility is to be shared by three agencies: the newspaper editors, the official machinery, and the historians. Whatever is published in the popular press is the inescapable responsibility of the editor concerned. Though he cannot be an expert in all fields of knowledge, yet in law and in ethics his responsibility for every word he allows to appear in his publication is final and complete. If our editors are not highly educated they should have a competent staff. The official machinery, instead of correcting falsehoods and upholding the truth, is bent upon perpetuating old myths and creating new ones. Two instances will substantiate the charge. First, the four principal national anniversaries commemorating major historical events are observed on wrong or doubtful dates. The Independence Day is celebrated on 14 August; according to the Indian Independence Act of the British Parliament, under which India and Pakistan were given their freedom, the two Dominions came into existence on 15 August. The Pakistan Day is observed on 23 March; but the Lahore Resolution was passed on 24 March. Jinnah's birthday is celebrated on 25 December; the latest research indicates some date in October. Iqbal's birthday, officially fixed on 9 November, is unknown and no effort has been made to search for the actual date. Secondly, the historical information conveyed to the students from the first year of the primary class to the end of the graduation is incomplete, distorted, misleading and inaccurate. All the prescribed textbooks are prepared by the official Textbook Boards and mostly written by college teachers who are government employees.

In every country it is the professional historians who set the standard for objectivity, independence and accuracy. This class does not exist in Pakistan. We have teachers of history, but they are all servants of the State, performing their duty according to the rules and regulations laid down by the Government, living and striving for

promotion to the next grade, to principalship, to deanship, to vice-chancellorship. The route to these heights of ambition does not lie in scholarly research but in other territories. There are innumerable cases of foreign-trained Ph.D.s in history and other fields serving on the staff of a university and attaining full professorship and even vice-chancellorship without publishing a single book, not even their doctoral thesis. To expect these men to stand up and say that the Junejo Muslim League's claim to be the real old Muslim League is historical nonsense is to hope too much. They have their living to look after. Then we have history textbook writers, who know the correct official in the educational hierarchy to get the lucrative contract, and realise that the way to make a lot of money is to carry out to the letter the wishes and instructions of their superiors and to produce a work which embodies the received wisdom not the historical fact.

There is also a class of research scholars employed by the several research institutions, academies and centres with full-time and well-paid responsibilities for "creating" history. All these institutions are established, sustained, financed and controlled by the Government, and have a deadening assembly-line of status and rank: research fellow, senior research fellow, principal research fellow, director. Their job demands unquestioned obedience to rules made by others and the carrying out of orders issued from above. Their duty is to obey and do and live, not to think and create and die. Often the director of such bodies is an absentee boss without relevant qualifications. For many years the Director of both the Centre for Pakistan Studies and the Centre for South Asian Studies at the University of the Punjab was the university's full-time Vice-Chancellor with a degree in economics and without a single book to his name, while the person who actually ran the centres was a doctoral student. Finally, we have popular historians, including teachers and others, who write on the principle of our film makers: give the public what it wants and make a good living. They don't, can't, analyse or create; they repeat and copy and imitate.

With such a gullible and innocent public and such energetic and efficient channels of disinformation to guide it, true history remains an unattainable ideal, an unrealizable dream.

Against the background of this historical "knowledge" which stalks the land, who is going to look critically at the claims made by the plethora of Muslim Leagues littering the political horizon? I

have written in some detail about the Muslim League, not because I like or dislike it, but to proceed to my argument that this political and popular view of the party dictates and distorts much of our historical writing, and that national politics is a major handicap in encouraging honest and comprehensive research work on our past.

Honest reseach means balance, a critical approach, an analysis of events, an assessement of forces, a judgement of men, a discussion of what went wrong and why, and attribution of achievement and credit as much as of responsibility and guilt, an ability to see the weaknesses and strengths of the actors on the scene, the courage to acknowledge the virtues and sound arguments of the enemies as readily as to point out the mistakes and miscalculations of our own leaders, and to weigh the various alternatives and possibilities which were available or could have been explored but were not, and to indicate the implications and consequences of this failure. In the absence of these aspects and dimensions the most impeccably documented and finely written account will have no depth: it will not increase our understanding of the past, nor enable us to see the impact of the past on the present and thus to view current fortunes and misfortunes in their historical context.

Honest history means asking awkward questions, making unpleasant inquiries, scrutinizing the actions and decisions of our great men, examining the major historical characters with as much impartiality as one can muster. If we are narrating the development of modern Muslim India without posing these questions and attempting to seek the answers, we are not producing history but writing a story: not even a story (for there are questions in a story too), but a fairy tale, a concoction of fancy, assumptions, gossip, hearsay, traditions, and unfulfilled wishes of the heart. It may be creative literature of a sort, but it is certainly not even an intelligent and intelligible chronicle of the past.

A thousand questions occur to mind which, not to speak of having been answered, have not been asked. Let me mention some of them at random, to illustrate how crucial they are to our history and how seriously we have sinned by not asking them.

Was the mutiny or revolt or rebellion of 1857 a "war of independence", as most Pakistani historians assert? If it was, doesn't that make Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan a traitor rather than a hero? How

and why did it come to pass that the lesson of loyalty to the British taught by the Sayyid was hugged by the Muslims of north India to their breast with such infatuation that no other policy or attitude ever approached their consciousness till independence? Why was Deoband a centre of pro-Congress opinions and propaganda? Why was the Muslim League not established ten or twenty years earlier? Why were the "nationalist" Muslims so strong only in Delhi and the United Provinces, though they were in a minority there and so proud of their Mughal legacy and culture? Why were Muhammad Ali and Wazir Hasan so intent on destroying the London Muslim League and humiliating Sayyid Ameer Ali? Why was Jinnah so anxious to accept a joint electorate on certain conditions? Why did the Muslim League sign the Lucknow Pact? Didn't it realise the disasters this would bring to the Punjab and Bengal, where the terms of the agreement ended all prospects for the formation of purely Muslim ministries? How did the Pact benefit Muslim India by conceding an outrageous weightage to the U.P. Muslim minority? Who allowed the small U.P. Muslim minority to dominate the Muslim League for so many years? Why did Jinnah abstain from the Khilafat movement? Why did he refuse to participate in the All India Muslim Conference? Why was Iqbal's 1930 proposal for amalgamating the four Muslim provinces in the north-west not even considered by the Muslim League? Why did the All India Muslim League and the All India Muslim Conference send a less than mediocre team to present their point of view before the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform? How did Sir Fazl-i-Husain succeed in keeping Jinnah out of the Punjab politics and in breaking his influence on the national level throughout the Round Table Conference years? Why did the Muslim League treat Chaudhri Rahmat Ali so meanly by stealing his ideas, arguments and terminology without any acknowledgement or mention of his name?

Coming to the years 1937-47 even more important and disturbing questions await answers. Why does the Aga Khan abruptly disappear from the political scene? Why was the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact made? Why did Jinnah court Sikandar so assiduously and not cultivate the Punjabi masses? Why was the Muslim League not organized in the Punjab even till 1946-47? Why did Jinnah snub the Sind Muslim League in 1938 and disallow it to pass a resolution pointing the way to a partition of India? Why was no serious attempt made to organize a League in the NWFP? Why was Sardar

Aurungzeb Khan's notoriously corrupt ministry tolerated? Why was Baluchistan ignored for so long? Why did the League alienate G. M. Syed of Sind, who had supported the idea of Pakistan even before Jinnah had thought of it, and had, with Shaikh Abdul Majid and Seth Abdullah Haroon, put a new life into the provincial Muslim League? Why did the wealthy landholders dominate the Muslim League right up to independence — and after it? Why was the League so conservative and short-sighted in its economic and social programme? Why were Dr. K. M. Ashraf and Ashiq Husain Batalawi not allowed to form a progressive wing within the Muslim League?

The manner in which Pakistan was demanded and won suggests even more distressing questions, because it changed the fate of several million people. At which precise point of time did the Muslim League decide in favour of a partition? If such a decision was taken, why is it not on record in the resolutions published by the League office? If it was not taken, how did the Lahore Resolution come to be thought of? Who drafted the Lahore Resolution? Why does it abound in anomalies, contradictions, imprecisions and legal vacuities? Did it demand a partition or a confederation? Why was the word "Pakistan" omitted from it? Is it true that Jinnah did not like the word? Why did he later become so fond of it? Why were the "states" of the Resolution changed into the "state"? What authority did the All India Muslim League Legislators' Convention have to amend a resolution (the most important the League ever passed) of a Muslim League Session? Why were the objections raised to this amendment by the Bengal Muslim League ignored? Why did the Muslim League fail to do any home work on the political, social and economic problems which Pakistan would face immediately on its birth? Why did the League leaders announce repeatedly from public platforms that Pakistan would be a homeland for the Muslims of India; and then why did Jinnah in his last speech in India ask the Indian Muslims to stay in India and conduct themselves as loyal citizens of the new Dominion? Why did the League send such a weak team into the Interim Government? Why was a Bengali Muslim not included in this team? Why was Pakistan so poorly and inefficiently represented in the Partition Council and other bodies which took vital decisions on the division of assets, personnel and material? Why did the League insist for so long and with such firmness on demanding the whole of Bengal and Punjab for Pakistan

(which common sense ruled out and the whole purpose of having a Muslim state rejected) that when the partition actually came about the Muslims of these provinces were not prepared for the grim uprooting, migration and bloodshed that accompanied it? Why did Jinnah refuse to have Lord Mountbatten as the joint Governor General of the two Dominions, knowing that a bit of unbending might gain much for the future Pakistan? Why were no negotiations attempted with the Sikhs on the one hand and Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah of Kashmir on the other? Why was the appointment of Radcliffe and whatever award he might give accepted blindly in advance? Why did the Punjab Muslim League prepare its case for the partition tribunal so late and without proper planning and care?

Questions of equal significance and import, about decisions taken after 14 August 1947 and which were in many cases disastrous for the new country, can be asked. But I will not wander into contemporary history. The above list, very inadequate and far from complete, should suffice to prove my point that we have not even made an effort to chronicle, appraise, analyse or interpret the events of the pre-independence period.

I must make one point clear. In citing these questions I am not implying that the Muslim League did nothing right. It committed several mistakes and made many miscalculations. But it was led by human beings, and not even its supporters and admirers expected perfection from it. Probably the Indian National Congress made greater and more serious errors. The idea behind drawing attention to these inquiries is to pinpoint the desiderata and to underline the impossibility of writing respectable history without tackling them.

The Pakistani historian does not answer these questions; he does not even ask them. Why? There are some obvious reasons. First, he does not distinguish between a nationalist movement and a political party. The All India Muslim League was a movement, the Pakistan Muslim League a party. The two ought to be studied in different contexts and judged by different standards. Secondly, he has come to accept the politicians' claim that the Pakistan Muslim League is a continuation of the All India Muslim League, and therefore any criticism of the nationalist movement would be taken as an attack on the current Muslim League, and that would amount to a criticism of the government of the country (our governments are as touchy as a well-bred virgin). Thirdly, he lacks the courage to speak out the truth. He is afraid of what the government might do to

him, of what the ignorant book reviewers would say of his work, of what the newspapers and magazines could write against him, and of what his own colleagues and friends might say. To do him justice, this explanation must be admitted to be genuine — but only in part. He lives in what may be called an intellectual prison-house: his tongue is tied, his pen controlled, his mind shackled, his environment polluted, his readers conditioned, his career dependent on the pleasure of the Establishment, his work always under threat of proscription. All this is true. But the truth has been, in all ages, a hard taskmaster and has demanded a high price from its upholders. This price is heavier in a society which is not accustomed to speak or hear the true word. It is the historian's duty, and should be his pride, to keep his integrity intact in the face of all risks and dangers, and not only to speak the truth but also to shame others into treading the same path. He has failed to discharge this duty.

Finally, the historian himself is a victim of a special brand of nationalism which has claimed his mind and heart. He thinks that any criticism of the nationalist movement and its major actors is as bad as subversion. To say that the All India Muslim League did something silly or that Jinnah made a mistake is an unpatriotic and anti-national act. And only an enemy of Pakistan can ask the question whether the partition of India did or did not solve the Muslim problem. The successive governments of Pakistan have upheld this view, and at times made their displeasure known by dismissing or transferring a lecturer or banning his work. The newspapers, mainly the Urdu ones, have shown greater zeal than even the State in protecting what they call the ideology (*nazria*) of Pakistan. With an irresponsibility that matches their ignorance and an enthusiasm that outruns their ability, they have fashioned an image of a "good" Pakistani: one who regards the All India Muslim League as the pious and virtuous mother of the country, considers Jinnah as infallible, and accepts the popular, conservative, ritual and reactionary view of Islam as the only true interpretation of religion. If you fall short of these measurements, you are an enemy of Islam, a traitor to Pakistan, a Leftist, a Communist (*surkha*, the Red One, is the favourate term), and you should get out of the country. (There have been times when this irrational sentiment travelled from the newspaper editorials and columns to the highest places. General Ziaul Huq, in his address to the first national convention of writers, attended by nearly all the intellectuals and men of letters of the

country, defined a Pakistani writer in these precise words and asked all those who did not fulfil the prescribed qualifications to seek another homeland.) There are numerous cases in which non-conformist writers and historians were pilloried by the press, called vulgar names, and dishonoured.

It is a great misfortune that the historian has come to accept this irrational view of nationalism and has tailored his academic fabric to produce a patriotic dress. By thus pandering to the emotions of these editors and columnists and dictators he has disgraced his profession and betrayed the truth. He has a distorted view of the judgement of history. British historians of the highest rank have published unfavourable, even harsh, critiques of Winston Churchill, who saved his country in the second World War and is by common consent one of the greatest men the world has seen. His status, his reputation and the esteem in which the British hold him have not diminished by an iota with the publication of these books. Nearer home, the careers, policies, decisions and even the personal characters of Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru have been subjected to merciless criticism in India. The exercise has done no harm to their image or to Indian nationalism. Is Pakistani nationalism woven of such weak thread that it will snap with the first critical assessment we make of our history? Let the historian ask himself this question and consult his conscience. Let him also recall that the search for truth (*haqq*) is a duty laid upon us by the Quran.

A special view of the All India Muslim League, sedulously nurtured by the leaders, the politicians, the government, the press and the popular writers, is responsible for much of our unrecorded or distorted history. The League was given a sacred place as the sole creator of Pakistan. All its critics were condemned as enemies of the nation. The long monopoly of power by the Pakistan Muslim League provided the party and its governments with an opportunity to brainwash the intelligentsia, the intellectuals, the educated classes and even the masses to believe that any account of the nationalist movement must coincide with a history of the All India Muslim League.

The wonder is that, in spite of this very privileged place given to the All India Muslim League and all the official and non-official energy and enthusiasm lavished on keeping its image ablaze, no history of it, critical or otherwise, has yet appeared. There has been no lack of encouragement, patronage, incentive, facilities or rewards.

The League papers have now been available to the scholars for over twenty years. The Jinnah papers are within their reach. Several State-run research institutions are in existence with the necessary staff and funds. Why has no work been done on the League? Is it that the "nationalist" historian's love of the League is nothing but an ostentation as empty of meaning as the *mulla's* love of Islam? Is his patriotism such a negative vacuum that no effort can be poured into it? If he cannot write history, he should at least tell us the reasons for his shyness. We might learn something from his excessive modesty.

Psychologists tell us that the two elemental forces in human behaviour are love and hate, the two agents which supply the motive power that runs our life. Apply this to history. We study the past because we love it. We write biographies of our great men because they made us what we are. But we also view the past through our enemies and opponents and the forces and ideas which were arrayed against us and which we defeated or failed to defeat or whom we converted into allies and friends. In any case, knowledge of one's enemies is an essential part of our historical training and understanding. If we don't have it, we notice only one side of our past; which gives us an imperfect, misleading and partial view of what we passed through.

The Pakistani historian's love for the Muslim League has failed to produce any history; he is like the lover who believes that to understand is not at all necessary to love — or who among us dare say he ever loved a woman! But what about the Pakistani historian's hatred for the enemies and denigrators of the Muslim League? Has his indignation prodded him into producing any history? Has he studied the organizations and forces which stood against the League and the Pakistan movement? Has he attempted the lives of important and powerful leaders who inspired the other side? Has he tried to fathom the motives of the men who refused to enter the Muslim League or to put their shoulder to the wheel of Pakistan? Has he shown any interest in understanding the minds and characters of those Muslims who chose to join the Hindu ranks and yet remained good Muslims? The answer to all such questions is a lamentable No.

Once again, we must try to identify the causes of this failure. If you reverse what I have said above about the mentality of the "nationalist" historian in relation to the Muslim League and the

Pakistan movement, one explanation of his attitude comes into sight. During the Pakistan movement the All India Muslim League ignored all other Muslim parties or opinions, claimed a monopoly of nationalism, and looked with contempt at all opponents. The non-League groups were painted as traitors to the national cause and as enemies of Islam. In consequence, once Pakistan had come into being patriotism was identified with a pro-Muslim League record. Hatred and condemnation were the lot of all those who had been outside the League; but not neglect. They were neither forgotten nor forgiven. Their past was recalled whether the occasion demanded the effort or not. Abuse was heaped upon them. Criticism was levelled at them, irrespective of its relevance or truth. Their loyalty to Pakistan was doubted. Even their affiliation with Islam came under a cloud. There were no strictures strong enough to fit their guilt.

(However, it must be recorded that when the ruling classes found it necessary to protect their own ends and to prolong the lease of their hold on authority they saw no harm in cultivating these "enemies", inviting them into the corridors of power and even making alliances with them. Between 1947 and 1958, the Pakistan Muslim League amended its constitution so as to open its membership to non-Muslims, accepted several old critics into its leadership, and made coalitions with its ancient detractors. Later, under military regimes, further steps were taken in the same direction. Ayub's official Muslim League contained some well-established "anti-nationalist" elements. Under Yahya Khan a few old Unionist Party luminaries were brought into the Cabinet. In the 9-party Pakistan National Alliance which engineered the anti-Bhutto agitation of 1977 culminating in the military *coup* of General Zia some Muslim Leagues sat with the Jamaat-i-Islami, the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Ahrars and the Khaksars. A year later they were too pleased to gulp down the crumbs thrown to them by the military ruler. The Junejo Muslim League was put into office, according to some reports even created, by a dictator and a usurper. In the 1988 elections this Muslim League joined the Jamaat-i-Islami to form an alliance, and from its public rostrums Zia's policies were identified with the ideals of the All India Muslim League and in its public rallies Zia's and Jinnah's pictures hung side by side).

How could the tender conscience of the "nationalist" historian bear the thought of wasting his time and energy on writing about

these enemies? The other historians also kept off, partly because they had neither sufficient knowledge of nor enough interest in the field and partly because they were afraid of adverse public reaction. In an intellectually or politically conditioned society the pioneer or the non-conformist is not a mere outsider, he is a rebel, and a danger to the *amour-propre* and conceit of the self-styled keepers of the public conscience. If an odd scholar thought of filling the gap and braving the storm his courage did not last long, nor did he. This hostile environment coloured all historical work, scholarly or not-so-scholarly. That explains why none of the official research institutions, nor any university department of history or political science, nor any centre of Pakistan or South Asian studies, nor any individual historian of note, has dared to write on these themes[1]. They have been put out of bounds for history.

So much for the scholars and the professional historians. What about the retired and the still functioning leaders of these non-League parties and movements? Do they hear no call of duty? Do they not realize that the memory of the ideals for which they once fought and suffered are fading fast from the consciousness of men and their work will soon be reduced to non-entities of history? Why has this prospect — dreadful for anyone who has played a part in history — not moved their hearts? They enjoyed, and some of them still enjoy, favourable opportunities of leisure and a good memory for recording their own reminiscences. They were not as deeply involved in politics as the Muslim Leaguers. Some of them lived a retired life after 1947, and God gave them many years to think, reflect, recall and write. Abul Ala Maududi, Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi, Sir Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana, Nawab Muzaffar Ali Qizilbash, Mufti Mahmud, Mian Iftikharuddin, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, and several others could have recorded their non-League nationalist past. They did not. If they were not given to writing (though some of them were, and they wrote much, like Maududi and Mashriqi), they could have, at the least, arranged the preparation of authentic histories of their parties by people working in the party

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1. In 1973-77, when I was in charge of the National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research, I gave some of my research staff the task of collecting and editing documents relating to three important political organizations: the Red Shirts, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and the Khaksars. All these were published by the Commission after I left the scene. But all historians know what I had to suffer for my pains.

secretariats and in possession of original and ample records. They did not even do this. If nothing else was possible, they could have directed the party to publish the most important of its documents, thus preserving its essential and basic record. Even this was not done.

Can we explain such utter failure on such a broad front? Not completely. Not even to our satisfaction. But certain factors should be taken into account when considering this massive inactivity.

One section of this non-League band, reading the signs of the times aright, abandoned politics and isolated itself from all public (and writing) activities. Former Congressmen and Communists made up this group. Another section, in search of fresh pastures, donned new clothes and joined the Muslim League bandwagon to taste power and to keep itself in the public eye. This was made up of small factions and individual politicians from all parties except the Jamaat-i-Islami. Later, even the Jamaat found it profitable to follow this course. Still another section kept quiet, fearing that anything it wrote in defence or explanation of its past will be condemned as an anti-national and subversive utterance, and the question will be asked, "Where were you in the Pakistan Movement?"

The attitude of the last section needs to be examined and assessed. Their fear is understandable. The hold of the "nationalist" view on the popular mind had assumed the proportions of an obsession. Lighted by the Muslim League establishment and fanned by the press, the flame of "patriotism" burned high and clear; but it singed the wings of truth. Afraid of this fire, the non-League parties retreated into their cosy shells. Silence was their sweet sanctuary. But this silence was not complete. They did not disappear from the public. Ataullah Shah Bukhari made his speeches from the Ahrar platforms, the power of his supreme demagogy undiminished. Inayatullah Mashriqi's Khaksars were very much there, the party's office was functional and its journal continued to appear. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan neither changed his views nor held his tongue; and when he was sent to prison, his lieutenants kept up the campaign. Abul Ala Maududi's Jamaat-i-Islami was the luckiest of all. It flourished in Pakistan better than it had in undivided India: its publishing houses proliferated, its branches multiplied, its membership increased, its political confidence swelled. The official hostility failed to deter it from propagating its views and strengthening its organization, except for a few years under Ayub

Khan. The Communists had a clear field till the mid-1950s when the party was declared unlawful — a fall-out of the Pakistan-U.S.A. defence pact. The People's Publishing House continued its normal business in Lahore.

If all these activities could be carried on in the open, surely these parties were free to offer a reasoned and factual justification of their pre-1947 policies and activities. But this they refused to do. A few books appeared on Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Ataullah Shah Bukhari and Abul Ala Maududi, written by their admirers. But there was no sustained attempt to present a coherent, comprehensive, documented account of any of these parties. I am aware of only one such work: Janbaz Mirza's multi-volume *Karwan-i-Ahrar*, which can claim no coherence or historical understanding, but is rich in fascinating detail, near-total recall, intimate pen-portraits of leaders, faithful reports of meetings, rarely available lists of party office-bearers and members of executive committees and other organs, and similar valuable records and *minutiae* about the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam. Even this kind of work has not been produced by any other party. The most surprising omission in this field relates to the Jamaat-i-Islami. Rich in talent and funds and the foremost in propagating its message through books, pamphlets and a large variety of periodicals, it has not yet prepared a history of its own or any collection of its documents and records.

In historical terms, the absence of any information about this group of parties is particularly unfortunate in two ways. In the first place, at least three parties — the Red Shirts, the Ahrars and the Khaksars — had deep and strong roots in the territories now comprising Pakistan and made a lasting impact on their history and political development. The Ahrars and the Khaksars were born out of the soil of the Punjab, and the Red Shirts out of the Pathan soil, and for nearly twenty years influenced and trained the minds of the people of these areas. They were indigenous growths in a sense in which the All India Muslim League was not, and they had grassroots credentials which the League did not have in these provinces till the penultimate year of the Pakistan movement. To eliminiate them from our history is to refuse to understand a part of the past of the vast majority of the Pakistan population. This consideration applies in a much greater measure to the Punjab Unionist Party, which was not only born in the Punjab but ruled it for over two decades with such confidence, authority and electoral preponderance that the

Muslim League was compelled to court and flatter it and enter into a humiliating pact with it. Not even the most rash historian can deny the significance of the Unionist Party in Pakistan's history.

In the second place, every non-League Muslim party, however small (even some non-Muslim parties, but of that I will speak later), made a contribution, however slight, to what we call the Muslim nationalist movement in India. To identify the nationalist struggle with the Pakistan movement commands no warrant; or we are forced to ask the questions: where was the Muslim League in the nationalist movement before 1940? what part did the Aga Khan play in our history? Why are Muhammad Ali, Sir Muhammad Shafi, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Sir Abdur Rahim mentioned in our history? what place should we give in our gallery of heroes to Shibli Naumani, Sayyid Sulaiman Nadawai, Hasrat Mohani and Iqbal? The questions answer themselves. The proposition is too absurd to deserve a moment's notice. But we must waste some space and time on analysing it becasue it is believed in, or accepted uncritically, by so many among the educated classes, and this belief is distorting and corrupting the teaching, writing and contemplating of history in the country.

From 1858 onwards the Muslim nationalist movement may be likened to a broad river which was joined and fed, over the years, by a large number of small rivers, streams, canals, brooks, rivulets and other bodies of water. The origin, colour, flow and quality of these tributaries were as diverse and bewildering as their number and size. They also flowed in from different directions. What they brought with them was of diverse nature — geographically, politically, culturally, educationally, religiously, ethnically — but essential to the life and richness of the river. They also flowed in at different stages along the length of the river. There were some streams which joined the waters after much meandering and winding, as if they had lost their way or were reluctant to merge their identity with a larger mass. There were others which flowed in rapidly, without even realizing what they were doing. There were some which came in, flowed in the same river bed for a little while and then flowed out as if their waters could not mix together. Then there were other streams, almost rivers in themselves, which never joined the main river but flowed parallel to it, often for long sweeps, sometimes for short stretches, sometimes very near the river with only a ridge between the two, sometimes far away with an entire plain separating

them. But they, too, were, in a way, parts of the big river, because both fertilized the same land. If they did not meet on the surface, their waters mingled beneath the soil and what grew on the land had been created by the irrigation of both.

Now let me translate these aqueous symbols into political reality. Taking the major river to be the All India Muslim League (though the identification is very approximate: there was no League before 1906, and during some later periods it was virtually defunct or politically derelict, as in the years of the supremacy of the Khilafat movement and the All India Muslim Conference), almost all other Muslim political and cultural organizations and institutions can be shown to have been its tributaries or parallel bodies of water. Each worked in its own field, according to its own lights, by its own values, in keeping with its own principles — but for the common end of promoting and protecting the interests of Muslim India. Each, however separated in time, place and policy, brought its offering to the national altar. Illustrations of this shared effort mark the historical landscape at innumerable spots. Space permits only the briefest references to some major examples.

Dar-ul-Ulum of Deoband was certainly not among the places where the idea of Pakistan evolved, nor did many of its luminaries favour the Muslim League brand of politics. But it was a distinguished centre of Islamic studies with a high reputation and an international studentship, and produced several men of distinction. Its outlook and syllabus were traditional, its teachers were out of touch and out of sympathy with the currents of modern thought both in the Islamic world and in the Christian West. The Deobandis created a strong ill-wind of sectarianism in Indian Islam, and in politics they chose to give their allegiance to the Indian National Congress and its dogma of a common Indian nationality. But who can deny the impact of Deoband, the learning of some of its professors, the sacrifices of its *alumni*, and its services in uniting the religious-trained classes of Muslim India? The Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, which may be called the political arm of Deoband, was for some years a significant movement which attracted to its ranks some of the greatest names in our history.

The Nadwat-ul-Ulema, Shibli's brain-child, threw up a parallel group of doctors of religion whose interpretation of Islam had little in common with that of their colleagues in Deoband. The works commissioned and published by the Nadwa's *Dar-ul-*

Musannifin could not have given much pleasure to the scholars of Deoband. Yet Nadwa could hardly claim to have given a liberal impulse to Muslim thought or practice. Sulaiman Nadawi's advice to Pakistan's constitution-makers did not betray a modern approach to contemporary issues. In spite of this, Nadwa upheld certain standards and values which were shared and applauded by many Muslims.

In the fields of culture and literature the two schools had impressive achievements which left a permanent mark on Muslim India. Works of respectable scholarship were published. Urdu prose was enriched. Shibli and his colleagues prepared some historical studies. Shibli himself created a new *genre* in Urdu poetry: political verse. If we insist that we owe nothing to Deoband and Nadwa, we should be obliged to abandon and disown a good part of our cultural, religious, literary and scholarly heritage. Are we prepared to make this senseless sacrifice?

The recent history of the NWFP is so closely tied up with the Red Shirts movement (or the Khudai Khidmatgars) of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Khan Sahib that to exclude it from our history is to fix the north-west frontier of Pakistan at Attock. The Red Shirts were at daggers drawn with the Muslim League. They fought desperately against the creation of Pakistan. They weakened the League's claim to speak for the whole of Muslim India. They made themselves a part of the Indian National Congress, the greatest enemy the League had. They bred and nurtured an ethnic nationalism. All this is true. On the other hand, it is also true that they alone created political awakening among one of the most conservative and backward Muslim populations. They took on the British at a time when most Muslim parties vied with each other in demonstrating their loyalty to the imperial rulers and relished the exercise. They trained the Pathan in the necessity of political suffering and the art of representative government. They administered the province for many years. These are not minor achievements, and the history of modern Muslim India is incomplete without their contribution. They opposed the creation of Pakistan, but now they are a part of it, and their past is our past.

While the borderland was being turned upside down by the Red Shirt philosophy, the Punjab was wallowing in its contradictions — but contradictions big with historical consequences. The province was taken over by three rival but very different political forces. All

were native to the soil and confined to the land (though there were a few Ahrars in the United Provinces), all appealed to the people on the strength of a set of definite, well-defined and strongly-held principles, all had grassroots organization, and all were led by an able and sincere leadership. But there the resemblances come to an end. In all other respects they were poles apart — ideology, religious approach, level of political action, attitude to constituted authority, ultimate objectives, method of winning public support, discipline, propaganda, social background, class composition, etc.

The Ahrars (members of the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, the Group of the Freedom Fighters of Islam, to give it its full name and title) were the rearguard of a section of the Punjabis who had agitated and suffered in the Khilafat movement and, after its collapse, had been abandoned shamelessly by the Congress. Not knowing where to go, and finding the Muslim League both unsympathetic and weak, they decided to organize themselves as a separate party. Once established, they were the vanguard of radical demagogy in Muslim India. With much courage but little foresight they dabbled in every sensitive issue: the Shia-Sunni controversy in the United Provinces, the anti-Ahmadiyya movement in the Punjab, the question of Muslim interests in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Their goal was a vague, undefined and nebulous state of the supremacy of Islam. In religion they were fanatic. In politics they were anti-British, anti-Muslim League, anti-Congress, anti-everybody. Their public activities were confined to fiery speeches, rowdy processions and emotional statements. But there were several positive dimensions to their existence. They were ready to suffer and make sacrifices; most of their ranking leaders underwent long spells of incarceration. Their recruitment ground was the lower middle class, and in it they created a devoted loyalty to their own brand of Islam, a spirit of discipline, and the habit of obeying the leader without question. They took over hundreds of mosques and functioned from their sanctuary. The sincerity of their top leadership — Ataullah Shah Bukhari, Chaudhri Afzal Huq and Habibur Rahman Ludhianawi — was beyond doubt. Bukhari, given the title of Amir-i-Shariat by his supporters, was a man of much learning in religious doctrine and a public speaker of exceptional ability who swayed the crowd like wind across the grass. The Ahrars were one of the best organized religious-political groups, and there is no doubt that they influenced the minds of the uneducated and half-educated

Punjabis to a considerable extent. No student of north Indian Muslim politics, and especially of the Punjab, of the later 1920s, 1930s and 1940s can afford to ignore their existence, activities and impact. In all-India politics they were ineffectual, but on provincial and local levels they enjoyed the solid support of a small but vociferous and active minority.

The Khaksars, another Punjabi movement, were the light brigade of a special kind of Muslim nationalism. Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi was everything to the party: founder, chief indeologue, supreme commander, political leader, religious thinker, and the fountain-head of all authority and power. Emerging from a middle-class family of Amritsar, he had had a dazzling record of scholastic achievements at the University of Cambridge, and on his return home had entered the Indian Educational Service, spent a few years in the Government of India and at the Islamia College, Peshawar, and then resigned to establish his movement. In his major piece of writing he evolved a new philosophy of history in terms of Islam and the demands of the modern age. It is a work of considerable intellectual power. The Khaksars were a tightly-organized, strictly-disciplined, para-militáry, uniformed party, using a *belcha* (spade) both as an implement of turning up the soil (symbol of labour) and, if necessary, an instrument of violence. Combining religious revivalism and social service with political awakening, they showed some promise as a pioneering group possessing the enormous virtues of unshakable devotion, unflagging discipline, hard physical work, an alive social conscience, and unquestioned loyalty to one leader.

But at some stage, which it is difficult to identify with precision, the movement and the leader went off the rails. Nothing constructive and lasting came out of the effort, and after 1947 Mashriqi led a politically hazardous life, facing political abuse and legal trials. However, in its heyday, which lasted a good 15 years, the movement enjoyed the respect of a large section of the Muslim Punjab, commanded the total allegiance of many among the lower and middle classes, demanded and received complete obedience from its membership, and, at least on one occasion, in March 1940, shook the hearts and drew the attention of the whole of Muslim India when it fought the rifle-carrying Lahore police with spades and its mobilized contingents died with their honour intact. Mashriqi spent a few years in prison and detention. In self-scrifice, courage

and suffering the Khaksars set a standard for the equal of which we have to go back to the times of the Khilafat agitation, but with the reservation, favourable to the Khaksars, that though a large number of people submitted themselves to imprisonment and torture in defence of the Ottoman Empire and the Khalifa of Islam they formed an amorphous group scattered throughout the subcontinent, while the Khaksars were one united body belonging to one province.

The last of this Punjabi trio is the most important, both historically and politically. The Punjab National Unionist Party received much public abuse from the Muslim Leaguers between 1940 and 1947, which is a matter of some surprise, because till 1945 the two parties were partners under the terms of the Jinnah-Sikandar Pact, Sikandar was a member of the League Working Committee and Jinnah was leaning over backwards to win and retain the sympathy and support of the Unionists. The tempo of the abuse increased with the League and Sir Khizr Hayat Tiwana disagreeing on the interpretation of the Pact, and it reached a *crescendo* when in 1946 the Unionist rump formed a ministry in coalition with the Congress and the Sikhs. But the Unionist Party was much older than the Jinnah-Sikandar Pact, and we must view its role in the Punjab in a longer and more accurate perspective.

The Pakistani "nationalist" historian's image of the Unionist Party — a rival of the Muslim League, a great supporter of the *raj*, a friend of the Hindus and the Sikhs, a traitor to Muslim nationalism, an enemy of the Pakistan movement, etc., etc. — has to be reviewed in the light of a number of historical realities, issues and complexities.

The story begins with the Lucknow Pact. Once the right of the Muslims of the Punjab to a statutory majority in the provincial lagislature was bartered away for large weightages granted to the Muslims in the provinces where they constituted very small minorities, all chances of a purely Muslim government in the Punjab were lost. The surrender of a right to which the Punjabi Muslims had a perfect title in law and morality was ordered by the Muslim League leadership to please the *ta'luqdars* and other wealthy backers of the League in the United Provinces (if there were other reasons, we have not been told about them). The Government of India Act of 1919 (the Motagu-Chelmsford Reforms) embodied this provision of the Lucknow Pact in the new constitution. Any intelligent politician would have predicted what followed. Muslim leadership in the

Punjab was left no choice but to reach an accommodation with the other communities in order to form a stable government in the Province. Had this coalition not been effected, there would have been no stable administration at all or a virtually non-Muslim ministry with the support of a handful of Muslims and probably a figure-head Muslim prime minister. The latter is exactly what happened in 1946 when the League had swept the Unionists out of sight, and was yet unable to command an over-all majority in the assembly. Thus not only was the Unionist Party a child of the Lucknow Pact (and therefore a progeny of the Muslim League) but also the only device through which the Muslim majority could rule the province, albeit in coalition with the non-Muslims.[1]

The second thing to recall to mind is that the Unionist Party was founded at a time when there was virtually no Punjab Muslim League; in fact, there had been no effective League in the province for many years. That is why the founders of the Unionist Party included practically every Muslim leader of influence and popular following. It is often, and conveniently, forgotten that Iqbal was among them.

Thirdly, the Unionists were able to produce and sustain a leadership of exceptional ability and political discernment. Mian Fazl-i-Husain was a towering personality, politically a match for Jinnah and in tactical manoeuvering his superior. His team could claim wide influence, extended experience and much ability, plus a loyalty among the rank and file which provided the ballast and ensured stability. No other province had the equals in ability and experience of such ministers as Fazl-i-Husain, Malik Firoz Khan Noon, Chaudhri Zafrulla Khan, Sikandar Hayat Khan, Shaikh Abdul Qadir, Chaudhri Shahabuddin, Mian Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana, Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana, not to mention a score of politicians of the second class who were good lawyers, efficient ministers, responsible legislators, and figures of esteem and authority in their constituencies. No party poor in manpower could have managed to run the province for over twenty years with such success, stability,

1. The folly of 1916 created similar conditions in Bengal, and the situation was aggravated by the absence of a Unionist-like party; hence all the difficulties and fluctuations and the rotation of ministers in provincial politics and such amusing absurdities as a Fazlul Huq-Hindu Mahasabha government.

good name and panache without an inspiring leadership and good middle ranks.

Fourthly, the party had the political sense to realize the virtue and benefits of an efficient organization. A network of branches covered the province, a hierarchy was established, office-bearers were elected or nominated regularly, funds were collected, meetings were held at various places and at defined intervals, a propaganda machine was assembled and kept in fighting trim, and the leaders of every level toured the countryside to keep their hands on the pulse of public feeling.

Fifthly, the party enjoyed the complete support of almost the entire Muslim press of the province. *The Nawa-i-Waqt* was a very late entrant. *The Eastern Times, The New Times* and *The Muslim League* had brief lives, tiny circulations, and the crippling disadvantage of being no more than poorly printed and badly edited rags. Against these puny and feeble sheets was ranged the might and ascendancy and ability and efficiency of the biggest and the finest Muslim press in India. Lahore was then the unrivalled intellectual and literary centre of Muslim India, and its daily press was made up of such giants as *The Zamindar, The Paisa Akhbar, The Inqilab, The Ehsan*, and *The Siasat*, not to count a dozen minor newspapers. Most of these supported the Unionists, and not often in self-interest. They realized that the party was the only Muslim group in sight capable of protecting the rights of the Muslim population and governing the province. It is difficult to believe that a band of such distinguished editors as Munshi Mahbub Alam, Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, Ghulam Rasul Mihr, Abdul Majid Salik and Murtaza Ahmad Khan Maikash could have lent their sympathy to a group of toadies and flatterers of the British *raj*. They had the courage and the ability to stand up, on the one side, to the powerful and richly-financed *Tribune*, the widely-circulated and finely-edited spokesman of the Hindus, often of the Hindu Mahasabha, and, on the other, to the well-established and prestigious *Civil and Military Gazette*, the pillar which took the weight of imperial rule in the province and commanded unshared official patronage. The Muslim League press was nowhere to be seen. The tiny upstart Ahrar party published more newspapers and magazines than the old and well-connected Muslim League.

Sixthly, it was one of the greatest achievments of the Unionists to scotch, almost kill, the Congress in the Punjab. India's

oldest, greatest, largest and richest political organization was unable to run and sustain an effective branch in the Punjab — an area on the top of its priority list. An affluent, advanced, highly-educated, professional Hindu class was waiting to be inspired and led by the Congress so as to better fight and subdue the Muslims. The Hindus controlled the economic life of the province, dominated the professions, ruled the educational system and its apex, the University of the Punjab, and were on friendly terms with the Sikhs. With all winds blowing in its favour, the Congress could have found it very easy to govern the province with the help, always at hand everywhere, of a few Muslims. But alas! the opportunity was snatched away from it when the astute Fazl-i-Husain creamed off into his Unionist Party the classes on which the Congress had pinned its hopes and built its ambitions. It was a paralysing humiliation for the Congress psyche. It was also a crippling blow to its bargaining capacity at the all-India level of politics, especially during the years of the Round Table Conference. The Unionists had humbled the most powerful nationalist movement in existence and barred the Punjabi gate to it.

Seventhly, the economic programme of the Unionist Party and its efficient and consistent implementation changed the complexion of the province. The safe majority that it enjoyed in the legislature freed it of the distractions of political bargaining, winning over the critics, intra-party intrigues, negotiations with opposing forces, risk of snap elections, and all such hazards inherent in representative democracy. The concentration on constructive work reaped a rich harvest: co-operative societies and banks, farm-to-market roads, improved transport, better utilization of land, bigger canals and headworks, slow but strategic industrialization, electrification and supply of water in urban areas, extension of educational facilities, and so many other things. The province was developed to a level where it could look the rest of India in the eye and often stare it down.

Two charges often brought against the Unionists by the Muslim Leaguers can be disposed of more briefly. One relates to the preponderance of the big landholders in the Unionist Party. It is perfectly true that the party flourished on the solid base of the landed classes. The Tiwanas, the Noons, the Daulatanas, the Jamalis, the Qureshis of Multan and Sargodha, the squires of Wah, the *pir*-landlords of Jhang and Dera Ghazi Khan — these were the

columns which held up the party structure and guaranteed its majority in the legislature. But to be fair to history, three facts must be remembered.

First, the economic make-up of the province, which consisted of a very large number of landed estates owned by families which had proved their loyalty to the British when the *raj* was in dire straits, made it inevitable that politics be tied up with the will and pleasure of about one hundred big and small *zamindars*. The Unionists did not create this situation, they were a creation of the situation. Secondly, the Unionists, in depending upon the rich landlords for their existence, were doing in one province what the Muslim League was doing, and had always done and continued to do till 1947 and even after that year, in every province. What was good for the League could not have been an evil for the Unionists. Finally, when the Pakistan demand swept away old moorings and a stormy change in the opinion of the public transformed the political horizon, ninety per cent of the families and tribes mentioned above, who had been the leading Unionist lights since 1925, swung over to the Muslim League. The League accepted, welcomed and applauded them, praised their patriotism, admired their national outlook, and offered them prime ministerships, chief ministerships, governorships, ambassadorships, and the highest party offices. The hated enemy of yesterday was the trusted friend of today. No reference was made by either side to opportunism or the art of being a turncoat or any such unpleasant matter. Only one leading Unionist lived by his conscience and preferred his integrity to a change in life (Sir Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana). He was condemned as a traitor by the Muslim League. Thus bad memories make fools of us all.

The second accusation hurled at the Unionists is that they were loyal to the British. This is a case of the kettle calling the pot black. The Muslim League had a long "honourable" record of loyalty to the ruling power. This duty is listed among the three aims and objects in the earliest manifesto of the Muslim League dated 1906. For many years each annual session of the party was declared closed by shouting three cheers to the King-Emperor. Nawabs and Knights often graced the presidential chair. The party's ranks in the legislatures were filled by men who had served their masters with distinction. Even non-official Leaguers were pleased to accept titles and decorations (Sir Ziauddin Ahmad of Aligarh). Apart from a dozen or so leaders on the top (Jinnah, A. K. Fazlul Huq, H. S.

Suharwardy, etc.), it is difficult to recall a prominent name without a few letters of the alphabet following it. Even those who had not been ennobled thus did not fail to carry the notice of their pedigree with their names (Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan). The policy of the League reflected the respectable place occupied by its leaders in the court. All its presidents before Jinnah were loyal citizens of the Empire, unafraid to assert the status and not a little proud of it. Jinnah was sometimes very critical of the British, but only in reference to contemporary occurrences. After 1936 he never condemned British rule in India or recount its sins. His strong language was reserved for the Hindus. For him, as for the League, the enemy was the Congress, not the British. It does not behove a party with this record to damn the Unionists as a band of loyalists.

I have taken some time to talk about the Unionists in order to clear a historical misunderstanding, not to be on record in its defence. No party, however spotless or stained its past, stands in need of defence. What it needs are understanding, knowledge of history, an impartial chronicler, an objective approach, an unbiased mind, and a search for truth. What happened has happened, the deed is done, the past has passed away. We must study the past, not condemn it; because it is our past.

Another party or movement of primary importance which is not acknowledged by the "nationalist" historian is the Jamaat-i-Islami. It was on the other side of the fence: opposing the Muslim League, criticizing severely and abusively the League leaders, and condemning the demand for Pakistan as un-Islamic and unwise. Its founder, who also pronounced its creed, Maududi, nursed such quenchless hatred for the Pakistan plan that he, a religious scholar, could not constrain himself from indulging in vulgar personal attacks on Jinnah and his colleagues. His interpretation of Islam, his insistence that his word be accepted as the only correct gloss on the substantial injunctions of the Quran, and his arrogance in declaring all who differed from him outside the pale of Islam — all this and, above all, the drift and contents of his interpretation are open to debate and disagreement (I have myself criticised him severely, and, to my mind, justifiably, in some of my earlier books).

But all criticism and disagreement cannot rob Maududi of his influence on the ideas and opinions of a section, however small, of Indian Muslims. First, as the editor of some newspapers of the United Provinces and Delhi, and later in the columns of his own

Tarjuman-ul-Quran from Hyderabad Deccan, he poured forth a vast amount of discussions, commentaries, decisions, views and theories on various religious issues, including the political problems facing the Indian Muslims. After thus converting some people, mostly in northern India, he moved to Pathankot in the (now Indian) Punjab and there established the Jamaat-i-Islami. The considerable literature which he produced and the disciplined manner in which he propagated his message made his party one of the important voices through which Indian Islam was then speaking. The narrowness of his circle was compensated by its deep conviction that he was speaking nothing but the truth, and by its unshaking and unshakable allegiance to his person. His devotees had complete confidence in his piety, rectitude and righteousness. He was not only an oracle on all religious matters but also the head of his party. From a position of such authority and eminence it was not difficult for him to command a veneration normally reserved for a spiritual leader. Through the translations of his works into Arabic he also enjoyed an international Islamic readership. It is within my personal knowledge that at some Arab universities he is studied as the only scholar of Islam from the subcontinent, to the exclusion of everyone else including Iqbal.

It is hardly deniable that through his word and his party Maududi made his own contribution to the stream of Muslim consciousness in India. His pre-independence career and activities should neither be ignored nor under-estimated. The Jamaat-i-Islami is a part of our history, as is the Punjab Unionist Party; in fact, much more so, because the Unionist Party is dead and gone but the Jamaat has, since 1947, prospered even beyond its own dreams. After a few difficult years it gathered strength, opened new branches, recruited fresh members and workers, issued a number of magazines and journals, established its publishing houses in Lahore and Karachi, and contested general elections. But its following stayed intensive rather than extensive, and it was not even a minor party in any parliament. It was encouraged (and its election campaign partly financed) by General Yahya Khan in 1970 as a counterweight to both the Pakistan People's Party and the Awami League, but to no electoral avail.

It was the next military dictator, Zia, who brought it into the government for the first time in 1978. Though later they parted ways, the Jamaat became, in spite of its public denials, one of the two

legatees of what came to be known as the "Zia mission", the other being the Junejo Muslim League. Naturally the two inheritors joined hands in 1988, won the Punjab provincial election, and now rule the country's largest province. With this alliance between two ancient enemies and their ascension to power arose an interesting situation. The official Junejo League, itself a result of Zia's breath of life and kindness of heart, claims that it is the only direct and legitimate progeny of Jinnah's Muslim League, and therefore the party that created Pakistan. Now it has embraced the Jamaat and seated it on the throne by its side; though others say that it is the Jamaat which is holding the League in its bear hug. Whatever the truth behind the infatuation and the relative postures of the two partners, the new situation should at least make the Jamaat acceptable to the "nationalist" historian, as it has made it welcome to a section of the press which had so far been swearing by the name of Jinnah and his Muslim League.

I have done with the Muslim parties (counting the Unionist Party as a Muslim group, because of its Muslim majority and its Muslim leadership), but not yet with the missing links in our historiography. Another major and significant group of which the Pakistani historian has not taken any notice is the Indian National Congress. As the greatest enemy of the Muslim League and the Pakistan movement and as a predominantly Hindu body it has received widespread abuse and universal condemnation, but absolutely no scholarly treatment. The press, the textbooks, the popular historians and the academic works are unanimous in the judgement that it deserves nothing but scathing contempt and voluble censure. This is a bias as injurious to history writing as to common sense.

The Congress demands our careful and close attention on several grounds. First, it was by far the greatest political force in the subcontinent and a nationalist movement of mass following and great weight. The Government of India was wary of it, and at times actually in fear of it. It also had, in Britain, the moral backing and unvarying political support of the Labour Party, the Communist Party, other Leftist groups, one wing of the liberals, and several influential dons, public figures, journalists and newspapers and magazines. The people of Pakistan were a part of India till 1947, and at least two generations of them were affected, for good or ill, by what the Congress did.

In the second place, during the last seven or eight years of British rule, the decision about the creation of Pakistan depended as much on the imperial power as on the Congress. Ultimately it was the change in the attitude of Sardar Vallabbhai Patel and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru that swung round the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, to conceding the principle of a partition of India, and it was Nehru's intimate friendship with the Mountbattens which dictated the legal nature, mechanism and operation of the partition, making it a secession and not a division, to the immense disadvantage of Pakistan. Doesn't such a party then become an essential part of the history of the making of Pakistan?

In the third place, out of its forty-one years of life the All India Muslim League spent twelve as an ally and political friend of the Congress. From the end of 1912, when the League, outraged by the unexpected annulment of the partition of Bengal, amended its aims and objects and came closer to the Congress, till the fizzling out of the Khilafat movement in 1924-25, the two organizations were on the best of terms, co-operating in public, dispatching agreed memoranda and petitions to the Government of India, sending joint deputations and delegations to New Delhi and London, and signing important pacts and drafting a joint scheme of reforms. During the later years of this period, with the Khilafat surge in full storm, the League had virtually ceased to exist as an effective independent body and most of its leaders and followers were functioning from within or in alliance with the Central Khilafat Committee, and this Committee was practically indistinguishable from the Congress. Thus to study the life of the Congress, at least in parts, is nothing less than looking at one of the two (the other being the Pakistan movement) most vehement and crucial periods of our own nationalist struggle.

In the fourth place, even in the years of its most virulent hostility against the Congress, the All India Muslim League was carrying on protracted negotiations with it. It debated the Nehru Report with the Congress at the Calcutta Convention. It talked to Gandhi, the sole delegate of the Congress, at the Round Table Conference. It exchanged long letters of substantial importance with Subhas Chandra Bose and Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Jawaharlal Nehru. It entered into conversations with C. Rajagopalacharia and Gandhi in 1944. It sat together with the Congress at the Simla Conference. It served under the vice-presidency of Nehru in the

Executive Council of the Viceroy in the years of the so-called Interim Government. During the final discussions with Mountbatten it sat round the same table as the Congress and talked to it across it. All these contacts, correspondence, debates and negotiations are a part of the history of the Muslim League and of our own nationalist movement. Can we follow their course, understand their contents or examine their results without a thorough knowledge of the attitude and policy of the Congress?

In the fifth place, there is a long and distinguished role of *our* leadership which occupied places of power and high offices in the Congress. Old Muslim Leaguers and young Pakistanis may remember them only as political opponents and enemies of the League. But political judgement and national bias cannot change history. I have called them *our* leadership because each of these men left an unmistakable and individual mark on the politics, culture and thought of the Indian Muslims.

Let me illustrate by recalling only a few of these names and their achievements and contributions. Badruddin Tyabji was not only the president of the Congress, but also a lawyer, a judge, a social and intellectual leader of the Muslims of Bombay, the founder of an influential and gainfully active Islamic Society, and a sincere and successful promoter of Muslim education. No history of the Muslims of Bombay can be contemplated without a mention of his career.

Abul Kalam Azad, besides his association with the Congress, was one of the truly capacious intellects Muslim India has produced in the modern age. He has left a deep impress on all of us through the example of his multi-dimensional life and the diverse roles he played so long and so well in the history of Muslim India. He was a religious scholar of wider learning and deeper insight than many well-trained and professional *ulema* of high standing. He was a brilliant editor of a series of distinguished journals. His columns and articles on Islamic and political topics were read by a large public and influenced his own and later generations. He was probably the greatest orator of all times in the Urdu tongue. Those who have heard him tell us that his speeches were equally rich in the precise choice of the most effective words and the most apt phrases, in apposite verses of Urdu and Persian, in liquid fluency, in thoughtful substance, in reasoned argument, in persuasive power, in impeccable elocution, and in moving effect. He was superior to his two celebrated contemporaries. Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung was an

excellent extempore speaker and a master of near-simultaneous Urdu translation of an English address. But in original composition on long stretches he was not in the first class. Ataullah Shah Bukhari was a master of demagogy, effortlessly eloquent in Punjabi and Urdu, and capable of swaying a crowd to an uncontrollable pitch of excitement. But he was at his best only before an illiterate or half-educated audience. Azad was unique in his ability to address a sophisticated group on a serious subject and still hold it spell-bound at his will. He was also a prose writer of supreme distinction, capable of making his reader laugh, smile, feel sad, even cry, dressing his thoughts in the raiment of his choice, putting beautiful words in a beautiful order, forcing the reader to share his mood, and employing a profusion of classical references and allusions which showed how well read he was in the history, religion and literature of Islam. He was, finally, a thinker of some originality in the field of Islamic philosophy and Quranic exegesis, especially in the exposition of his theory of *rabubiat* (an explanation of the Divine creation of the universe and God's act of sustaining its existence). To dismiss such a giant as a Congress "show-boy" and a renegade is to exclude something very valuable from our culture and thought.

Muhammad Ali Jauhar's restless life and impressive sacrifices are well known and I will not waste the reader's time in enlarging upon them. As an editor, politician, public speaker, Khilafat leader and poet he is a major actor in the drama of our national history — educated at Oxford, Muslim to the innermost core of his heart and head, fanatic in his convictions as if they were dogmas, a devotee and a denunciator of Gandhi by turns, frank of speech, free with his opinions and prejudices, fluent and caustic in his English prose, author of such highly Persianized and Arabicized Urdu letters addressed to Abdul Bari Farangimahalli that you need two dictionaries at your elbow to read them, greedily fond of good food and sweetmeats, diabetic but careless of his health, as free with his own money (of which he had never enough) as with the others' (of which he always had a lot), larger than life, contradicting himself, flamboyant, heroic, with an eye to the effect even in his death and his funeral, a lover of freedom who died in a free land.

Then there was Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari of Delhi, embodying in his person and deportment 300 years of Muslim culture of the city. A truly remarkable figure: a physician by profession, the first Indian to hold a house job in a British hospital

(Charing Cross), drawn into politics by an inner urge which he himself did not comprehend fully, a friend or mentor of every Congressman of his times, making a lot of money, living like an aristocrat, turning his house into a rival to the Viceregal Lodge in the importance and weight of the decisions taken within its fourwalls, highly esteemed by those who knew him and also by those who didn't.

Delhi could show at the same time another figure of the same stature and mould. Hakim Ajmal Khan was the best-known "oriental doctor" of his age, soft spoken, master of the Urdu speech in its pronounciation and delicate nuances, a politician of rare amiability and still rarer integrity, capable of lending grace to the occasion by his presence, a talented poet in Urdu and Persian.

All these were outstanding men, not necessarily outstanding politicians. With them was a larger group of smaller merit, but sterling merit nevertheless. Habibur Rahman Khan Sherwani was a scholar, proud owner of one of the finest private collections of books and manuscripts, and a philanthropist of no mean order. Mazharul Huq of Bihar was a very successful barrister, respected by his own party as much as by the Muslim League, and the man who made it possible for the two parties to come together at Lucknow in 1916.

The list is too long to summon everyone on this roll of honour. I think I have said enough in support of my contention that a not inconsiderable portion of Muslim India's intellectual and political elite was at one time or another in the Congress. Moreover, in purely intellectual terms the Congress could at all times mobilize a much larger phalanx of Muslims than could any Muslim political party (a very significant fact to keep in mind while judging the overall performance of the Muslim League). Shouldn't the presence of so many Muslim luminaries in the Congress make it worth our while to study the party?

In the sixth place, several of the best-known Muslim League leaders had been Congressmen before they became Leaguers. The exemplar of this group is Jinnah himself. He spent his political apprenticeship and early years as a Congressman, his later youth and a part of middle age in both Congress and the League, then a few years in exile in London, and the last eleven or twelve years in the Muslim League. We cannot understand the political career and opinions of the creator of Pakistan nor write his life without a complete knowledge of the history of the Congress. I am amused,

but also exasperated, by the long articles in the English and Urdu press and the references in popular and academic history books dwelling upon and emphasizing Jinnah's departure from the Congress, but which amount to nothing except a few invectives against the Congress and repeated references to its Hindu character and composition. This approach may irritate the historian, but it confuses the student. I have met several schoolboys and schoolgirls who think that their and Pakistan's Jinnah had no public life at all before his return to India from London to reorganize the Muslim League. The undergraduates know a little more and therefore ask more awkward questions. One of them said to me, "Why did it take the Quaid-i-Azam so many years to see that the Congress was a Hindu body?" Another put a question which was even harder to answer: "What gives us the right to condemn the Congress Muslims as traitors? It took Mr. Jinnah nearly thirty years to realize that he could not live with the Congress and his conscience. Maybe, given a few more years, Abul Kalam Azad and Ghaffar Khan and Rafi Ahmad Kidwai and others would have reached the same conclusion and come over to the Pakistan movement."

Besides Jinnah, there were several other important men who were either in the Congress for even longer than Jinnah was (Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, Mian Iftikharuddin), or were such close friends for many years of the top Congress leadership that it might not be a distortion of the truth to call them camp-followers (not in a derisory sense) and sympathizers of the party (the outstanding example being the Maharaja of Mahmudabad), or were so equally active in and respected by both the Congress and the League that the only label which one can put on them is the absurd, double-barrelled but unavoidable "Congressman-Leaguer" (Hasrat Mohani). On the lower levels there is a long list running into thousands of people who shared the views of both parties, or had divided loyalties, or were unable to define their stand so clearly as to be enrolled in either this or that party, or were unashamed opportunists. If the historian draws a line between the Congress and the Muslim League, between "them" and "us", between enemies and friends, which special category does he create to put this crowd in? The no man's land which these people created and occupied was as large as a buffer state. By every principle of warfare the no man's land must be conquered by one of the belligerents to achieve complete supremacy. But this gray area was never vanquished and occupied. In the

broader sense, the Muslim nationalist movement was at all times composed of a bigger or smaller Congress-oriented segment. Seen in this light, the Congress remained till the end a part of *our* nationalism. To realize the truth of this estimate one has only to eliminate from our history and consideration everybody who was ever a member or a sympathizer of the Congress and to see what is left behind. Thus, by all canons of historical scholarship the Congress is a principal subject of study for our scholars and students.

Another consideration leads to the same conclusion. The party which we usually refer to as "nationalist Muslims" was predominantly a Congress group. But, as the name spells out, every member was a Muslim, and the group has therefore the same title to our attention as has the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam or the Jamaat-i-Islami or the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind. Why should the nationalist Muslims be treated differently simply because they chose to side with the Congress? Didn't the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind do the same thing? In fact, the nationalist Muslims raise in our history more interesting and relevant questions then does the Congress itself. Why did they choose to call themselves nationalist Muslims? Why did they retain the qualifying and restraining "Muslims" in the title, knowing that the Congress was allergic to all openly religious terminology? How did they define their "nationalist" status or ambition? There was only one nationalism at that time — Indian nationalism — and it was much later that any Muslim League leader spoke of a separate Muslim nation in India and of a Muslim nationalism. Were they trying to yoke together nationalism and Islam? If so, they are the direct progenitors of the Pakistan movement. Were they, implicitly and cleverly, expressing the feeling that Muslims who wanted the freedom of India as much and on the same broad pattern as the Congress could yet rather not be a part of the Congress and retain their individuality and separate political personality? If this interpretation is not invalid, were they not Muslim "separatists"? Anyway, why did they establish a party of their own outside the Congress? If there could be a Socialist Party within the Congress, there was room enough for a Muslim party in that ample bosom. Were they trying to mark out a middle path between the Congress and the Muslim League? Were they or were they not believers in the united Indian nationalism of the Congress variety? If they were, why did they separate from the Congress? If they were not, why did they support the Congress? Why did they fail in the end

in whatever they had set out to achieve? Intriguing and ticklish questions for a historian, opening up a fascinating field of inquiry and investigation — an exercise impossible without understanding the history and philosophy of the Congress.

In the last place, if I have still failed to convince the "nationalist" Pakistani historian of the necessity of studying the Congress, perhaps an argument from polemics may succeed where reason has failed. If this historian does not agree with all that I have said above, I am sure he will concede the point that the Congress was the principal antagonist of the All India Muslim League for most of the latter's life and its greatest enemy during the Pakistan Movement. If that is the only way to look at the Congress, it is still imperative for him to make a very careful study of it because common sense demands that we know our enemy. "Foreknowledge is strength" and "to be fore-warned is to be well-armed" are cliches with which, I hope, he is familiar. But let me put it to him that in historical understanding hindsight is also strength. Knowledge of what the enemy has done to us in the past will not only enable us to understand his strategy, weapons and plans, but also teach us what to expect from him in the future. Given the nature of India-Pakistan relations since the two countries gained their freedom, it is not far-fetched to equate India with the Indian National Congress (which has ruled the country till very recently) and Pakistan with the All India Muslim League (a self-styled faction of which still rules a part of the country). If that be so, the responsibility of the historian increases in scope and immediacy. The gnomes of the Foreign Office may relish the illusion that they make our foreign policy, the members of Parliament may entertain the happy feeling that they lay down the line for the Foreign Minister, and the press, never held to account for its ignorance or for its outbursts of emotional fervour, may live with the pretence that it influences the opinion of the public and moulds the convictions of the political parties — but it is the historian alone who has, or should have, the knowledge and the ability and the opportunity to inform all these centres of decision-making and debate of the true facts of the Congress's past and his interpretation and assessment of them. If the historian is not prepared to do his duty to history, he might still be willing to do his duty to his country. If the voice of knowledge has failed to move him, the call of patriotism may touch a chord. Or, is even that hope extravagant?

CHAPTER 3

PRIVILEGE ABUSED: THE UNIVERSITY HISTORIAN

There are several good reasons for looking closely at the performance of the Pakistani university historian. In this category I also include the people teaching at the post-graduate colleges, all those who teach political science (because at every university there is a compulsory paper on the politics of modern Muslim India in the M.A. syllabus of political science and an obligatory part-paper on the same theme in the B.A. syllabus) and all those who teach the hotchpotch called Pakistan Studies.

First, they are, or should be, the principal users of the source material enumerated in Chapter One. Secondly, they can, if they are so inclined, help in eliminating the biases, prejudices and distortions discussed in Chapter Two. Thirdly, they are, directly or indirectly, **responsible for writing textbooks which are a cruel travesty of truth. Directly, because they approve and prescribe these books;** indirectly, because all the authors of these textbooks have been taught and trained by them. Fourthly, in every country it is the university historians who produce the largest number of historical works. Finally, they encourage, lead and inspire historical scholarship.

How well the Pakistani university historian has performed these tasks is the theme of this chapter.

One essential fact should be noticed here. We don't have any university in the normal, generally accepted, sense of a body of

undergraduates, a very small number of graduate students, and a large well-educated, trained, academic-minded and hardworking group of teachers. Such a thing does not exist in Pakistan, due to the peculiarities of our university structure. First, we have a number of technical universities, training people in engineering, technology, medicine and agriculture; which means that there are no faculties of these disciplines in the general universities. Thus we start with the assumption that technology is not a part of learning, that an undergraduate need not know anything about science in its application and therefore shall never be able to relate his knowledge with the facts and problems of his age of technology, and that C.P. Snow's two cultures have been effectively separated by our university system.

Secondly, we have bifurcated the functions performed by a university in the West by asking the colleges to admit, teach and prepare a seething, unruly, badly-schooled mass of undergraduates of vastly varying backgrounds and quality for a degree examination whose curricula, syllabi, question papers, marking, assessment and conduct are determined, made, controlled and conducted by the university. Thus the University of the Punjab will award the same second class degree to an alert, mentally developed, well-taught, socially aware boy of the Government College, Lahore, to a dim-witted, backward, ill-taught, ill-informed boy of the Government College of a small, out-of-the-way town, and to a hard-working, backward, untaught, badly-schooled and unguided boy who never went to a college and has appeared as a private candidate. The same class, a second, is earned by the three boys of my example because the syllabus is so rigidly formal, the textbooks so regimented and uniformly bad, the teaching so inefficient, the question paper so stereotyped, and the marking so unconscientious, that a boy of less than average ability and application can memorize the prescribed books and get a degree without ever entering a library or thinking for himself or, in the case of the private candidate, going to a lecture hall. But that is not all. Once this boy has graduated and wants to study further, he joins a university. Thus the university is a purely examining body for the undergraduate and a teaching-*cum*-examining body for the graduate student. The Western idea of a university as a place where the school-leavers are thrown together in an academic life, made to learn as much from each other as from

their teachers, required to work very hard, and taught to think independently, does not apply to a Pakistani university.

But the confusion is not yet complete. One university situated in the capital city has *no* undergraduates. It is merely a centre of post-graduate research, not a university in any meaning of the word. Worse still, a few hundred colleges also run post-graduate classes, without adequate staff, books or other facilities. Then there is a very large group of students taking their post-graduate degree as private candidates with no teaching at all. All this makes nonsense of *any* idea of a university. Add to this confusion the fact that both teaching and examining are being done on all levels in two languages, Urdu and English, and the student chooses the stream according to his proficiency in either language, though in fact he is proficient in neither. The academic mischief is now all ready to brew.

Thirdly, all universities are State controlled (the two private universities of Management Sciences in Lahore and of Medicine in Karachi are irrelevant to our present study), all the Government Colleges, of which there are several in each district, are of course official bodies, and since 1972-1973 all private colleges are also government institutions. This is a high hurdle in the path of independent and impartial inquiry in every field. A civil service regulation obliges every teacher to submit what he has written for publication to the "competent authority" before sending it to the publisher. It is his responsibility to obtain prior written orders approving the publication of the matter which was submitted. A clerk or a junior officer in the department concerned will read the manuscript, write a note on it and send it to the next higher level. Theoretically, the permission is granted by the highest authority in the Ministry.

The draconian rule may not matter so much to a lecturer in physics or biology except injuring his self-respect if he has any (civil servants can't enjoy the luxury of possessing this commodity in our bureaucratic sturucture). But it shackles the teachers of political science and history; discouraging some, forcing others, against their conscience, to change and amend what they have written, and silencing many. The government is not embarrassed by the rule or by the consequences of its operation. The Sharif Report defended the interdicition with the unashamed argument that it was absurd to demand academic freedom in an institution which was financed by the government. The matter rests there. A college or university

teacher can express, in lecture or writing, only those historical truths which meet the approval of the government.

Stanley Wolpert was a foreigner and so escaped any penal action for writing his *Jinnah of Pakistan*, but the import of the book into Pakistan was banned. A Pakistani author is more vulnerable, and in his case official disapproval may range from a simple warning to behave himself to rigorous imprisonment. No government regulation could have killed historical research more effectively and completely.

What passes understanding is that with such crippling restraints in existence the federal and provincial governments and their universities go on merrily establishing and multiplying research centres, institutions and academies, all formally equipped with libraries, research staff, supporting services, telephones, transport, buildings and the rest of the paraphernalia of an office. Is it worth the while to spend millions of rupees on producing official versions of history which are so uncritical and unbalanced that no respectable historian, native or foreign, will take them seriously or quote them, except for the purpose of illustrating the Pakistani historian's inaptitude in handling history?

However, these disadvantages from which the university and college teacher suffer cannot be offered as an argument in defence of their inactivity. Every law is open to circumvention. The great tin god on the top can be influenced, pressurized, cajoled, deceived or bribed. All these approaches are simpler and easier when the target is the low-level functionary who is going to prepare the all-important note on the file. There is no subsequent risk for the author, for normally no one reads a scholarly work and the delinquent's indiscretions may never be discovered by the erring or dishonest officialdom. There are other ways to exploit the ignorance of the bureaucratic superiors. An actual case illustrates this. A lecturer wanted to publish his doctoral thesis written at a foreign university in which he had been critical of the government. He went and saw a Deputy Secretary who, duly impressed by the name of the foreign university, agreed to help the lecturer, called in his private assistant, and dictated a note saying that as the book had been written at the prestigious University of — it would be in the national interest to allow it to be published. Nobody demanded the typescript for scrutiny. The senior officers did not even read the Deputy Secretary's note, and in due course the written permission arrived. I

don't know of any case where a request was turned down. But, of course, the prohibition acts as a damper.

My own experience illustrates some not so well-known dimensions of the exercise of obtaining the required permission. In 1954, when I was teaching at the Government College, Lahore, I completed a book entitled *Comparative Constitutions*, which explained the political systems of Great Britain, the United States, France, Switzerland and Pakistan, and was meant for the political science undergraduates. I wrote out an application, appended it to the typescript, and submitted it to the Principal, who forwarded it to the office of the Director of Public Instruction. Several weeks passed by and I did not receive any reply. I mentioned the matter to the Principal, and he suggested that I should go and see the officer concerned. I did so and found myself in the presence of a gentleman styled "Officer-in-Charge, Collegiate Education, Punjab", who had been a lecturer in chemistry before occupying his present position. I explained the purpose of my visit. He summoned his clerk and asked him to bring my "file". After a quarter of an hour the "file" was on the desk. When opened it was found to contain my typescript and my application and nothing else. The officer looked up and inquired:

"Is this your application?"

"Yes", I answered.

"Well . . .", he mumbled.

"I have been waiting for a reply all these weeks", I enlightened him.

"Yes. Is the matter urgent?" he asked

"For me it is", I said. "The sooner it is cleared the earlier will the book be published".

"I see. Is there anything anti-government in it?" he asked.

"No. It deals with some foreign countries. But there is one section on Pakistan".

"Ah! Are you sure there is nothing anti-government in that section?", he inquired with boredom etched on his face.

"I am certain. I know I am a government servant. How can I write against my own government?" I argued.

"I guessed so. We must all be loyal to Pakistan, you know", he impressed upon me.

"Of course", I assured him.

"Now I must deal with the second point. You know the rules about side income?" he asked.

"I don't", I said. "Are there any such rules?"

"Oh yes, there are", he said, with reproach in his eyes, saddened by my ignorance. "The government can't allow you to make unlimited money as long as you are in its service".

"Are there any limits?" I wanted to find out the constraints under which I had, without knowing it, put myself by becoming a lecturer.

"Oh yes. Let me find out". He again called his clerk and asked for a certain file. This time it took him only ten minutes to locate and bring it. The official opened it, flipped over certain sheets, flipped back, then turned over a couple of pages, began to read a paragraph to himself as if it were the scriptures, repeated it twice, said "Ah!", looked up and "I have found it", he said, "I knew it was in this file, you know". Then he paused, as if waiting to be complimented on his excellent memory and efficiency.

"I am sure you are on top of your work", I could not keep him waiting for a (metaphorical) pat on the back.

"I am. I always have been. When I was a lecturer . . . ." There followed a 5-minute monologue on his lecturing days, his conscientiousness, punctuality and a few other virtues. Then he returned to the present. "Now, let us see. The rule says that you can derive from this book, if and when it is published — if, mind you; I have the authority to stop its publication if I like — yes, what does the rule say? Here it is. The rule says that you can derive from this book a material benefit not in excess of Rs. 1,500 per annum. Is that clear?"

"It is quite clear", I hastened to assure him before he would embark upon a translation or paraphrase.

"Let me make it quite clear", he could not be balked of his wish to enlarge upon the obvious. I let him make his little speech, and then I asked,

"But, Shaikh Sahib, if the book sells well and my royalties go above the maximum allowed by you, what happens to the excess money?"

"Eh!" he burst out. "The excess money? Where does it go? I don't know. Let me look at the rules again."

To cut the entertaining story short, I left the official's room after 45 minutes of wasted time and irritating conversation, but with a slip of paper bearing the *sarkar's* generous permission to me to become an author.

I learnt a few salutary lessons from this encounter with the Government. First, if as a lecturer you want to write a book get ready for a humiliating experience. Secondly, be sure you don't write anything which the government thinks is critical of it (I was later told by an author of a botany textbook that he, too, was interrogated on this point). Thirdly, try not to write a good book, otherwise only your publisher will gain from your skill and talent.

Many years later, when I again found myself in the Government, not only did I refrain from submitting my manuscripts to any authority but asked my research staff to do the same. But I did do one thing. I sent to the Prime Minister a short memorandum on the subject, condemning the rules, conveying my inability to abide by them or to apply them to my staff, and giving reasons for my decisions. A copy was posted to the Minister of Education. Acknowledgements were received from both, but neither dissent nor disapproval. But this time I was not teaching at a college in a lowly capacity but holding the highest non-political appointment in the country and also acting as a policy adviser to the Prime Minister. Axiom: it is not your person that matters but the padestal under your feet.

But such rules cannot be used by the college or university historian even as a pretext for his failure. I grant that he cannot attempt a study of Jinnah's political career or even an "acceptable" biography. But I can't think of any unfavourable factor that inhibits him from working on, say, Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk, Seth Abdullah

Haroon, Zafar Ali Khan, the Raja of Mahmudabad, Hasrat Mohani, Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi, Sahibzada Sir Abdul Qayyum, Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, Sir Muhammad Shafi, Mian Fazl-i-Husain or Shibli Naumani (I have not mentioned any Bengali Muslim because the material for that kind of work does not exist in Pakistan). We have books on some of these people, like Zafar Ali Khan, Hasrat Mohani and Muhsin-ul-Mulk, but these are not works of political or historical scholarship.

Again, I concede that it will not be easy for our historian to produce a history of the All India Muslim League of its Pakistan movement years or of the Pakistan Movement itself which wins the approval of the government and is also a balanced assessment (though all the source material is available in the country). But what stops him from embarking upon a history of the municipal government in Lahore, or a study of the origins and development of the Punjab Legislative Council and Assembly, or an inquiry into the status of the tribal area in the north-west, or an examination of the working of local government in Sind, or an assessment of the role of the Punjab Civil Service, or a study of the influence on history of one important Urdu newspaper like the *Paisa Akhbar* or the *Zamindar* or *Inqilab*, or an account of the big landholding families of the Punjab and their collective impact on the history and politics of the region? The list of such themes is very long, and the sources required for the purpose are available within the country.

It may be argued that some of our professors put so high a value on their integrity that they prefer silence to made-to-order research. But there is a flaw in the reasoning. How did a professor of such a tender conscience find it possible and convenient to teach for thirty years what he knew to be wrong or perverted or merely conformist history? Was his sense of right and wrong so selective that it was active in one department (writing) but moribund in the other (teaching)? Further, if we suppose, for an instant, that such a paragon of virtue and self-abnegation exists, another question has to be answered by him. Why does this honest historian not write something after his retirement from service, when the official regulations don't apply and he is a free citizen? I don't know how he will answer the question. But the fact is that a man who has not held a pen in his fingers since he wrote his doctoral thesis (which he had to do to earn the degree) has lost the skill to handle a pen. A professor whose reading has been limited throughout his career to

his lecture notes (made several years ago and not even brought up to date) will not, cannot, begin to develop the habit of study at the age of sixty. To expect this transformation is to do him an injustice. To ask him to change his nature falls in the category of cruelty to man. Let us leave him in the enjoyment of his well-earned old-age obscurity.

Money has an irresistible attraction. Some of these professors, who avoid scholarship as if it were a plague, have the time and the inclination to write textbooks. A few among them will stoop to flatter, cajole and beseech a publisher to commission them to prepare a textbook. Others will persuade, influence, or bribe the official Textbook Boards to appoint them as textbook writers, for in this lies a great deal of money. Still others, who have never written anything, will use their resources to obtain editorial and supervisory positions in the Boards. Every official textbook, even on the school level, has to have an author, an editor or a team of editors and a supervisor; sometimes the book is revised by a third person or team. This complicated and completely unnecessary machinery has been invented, not because it produces satisfactory textbooks, but because it is good business for everyone who is a part of it.

The professor has some other avenues to explore in search of extra income. One is to be appointed a paper-setter. This is good for his ego and brings in some money. Another is to become an examiner, of any kind ranging between the middle class of schools and the Ph.D. thesis. This is a source of considerable income if he is honest, and of much income if he is not. Still another is to manage an appearance on the television. This is deeply satisfying, for it makes him known to the public, and the payment is generous. One professor of history at a well-known university told me that for ten years he earned, consistently, three times as much as his salary from his work for the radio and the television; and, in the bargain, almost every radio listener knew his name and every television viewer his face. In exactly thirty-four years of teaching he had published one slim volume of 200 pages and his doctoral thesis. Still another preoccupation for our professor is to seek the membership of the Boards of Studies and of every kind of academic and administrative committees and sub-committees. Nomination to these bodies brings a rich harvest of influence, prestige, patronage, travelling and daily allowances, and an added qualification at the time of promotion; for the unscrupulous it can also mean extra income.

I have dwelt on these extra-scholarly activities and ambitions of the professor to prove that his indifference to writing cannot be explained by lack of time or aversion to work or want of ambition. The real and primary factor which makes the professor a drone of the academic world is the decision of the universities themselves to encourage and nurture ignorance and lethargy and to discourage learning, scholarship and hard work. In 1973 when the academic staff of all the universities in the country was asking for a revision of their salaries and an improvement of their terms and conditions of service, a high-level deputation of professors with plenipotentiary powers arrived to negotiate with the Federal Minister of Education. In these protracted talks, besides other points, two significant demands were made by the deputation: salaries of the university teachers must be integrated with the national pay structure of the civil service, and the qualifications prescribed for appointments and promotions should be those suggested by the staff itself. The first demand was conceded without much haggling, and the professor was given Grade 20 (equivalent of a federal Joint Secretary), the associate professor Grade 19 (Deputy Secretary), assistant professor Grade 18 (Assistant Educational Adviser or the old Assistant Secretary) and the lecturer Grade 17 (Section Officer or the old Assistant or Superintendent). The poor dons could not control their excitement on their elevation to a platform which was only a little lower than the one occupied by the bureaucracy. That was the limit of their ambition in worldly goods and official status.

The second point is more relevant to what I am discussing. When the question of qualifications for the two highest appointments arose, the deputation recommended that, besides the degrees required and the length of experience, what the teacher should have written and published was of secondary importance and it was quite enough if he had written a few articles. This surprised the Minister, though he was not a scholar. He asked the deputation if a teacher who had lectured at a university for 10 or 20 years was not expected to have written any books, and why so much work was being done at the universities in other countries. But the deputationists knew that if any requirement higher than a few articles were prescribed, nearly all the senior dons would find themselves dismissed or stuck at their present ranks. They had already persuaded the Education Secretary, who had never written a book, to support them. Ultimately they won their case, and rules

were framed to grant official and statutory recognition to the university teachers' refusal to tread the path of scholarship. Since then, an assistant professor, to be qualified to be promoted to an associate professorship, is only required to have published five research papers in his field in "a journal of international reputation". To be a full professor the number of such articles must be eight.

This is best illustrated in the following advertisement which appeared in all the newspapers in the summer of 1989, inviting applications for two posts at the National Institute of Pakistan Studies at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and which was signed by the Director of the Institute by name, who himself did not fulfil any of the qualifications:

Rank:	Minimum academic qualifications and experience:
Professor (Iqbaliayat)	Master's Degree/M. Phill. With 18 years teaching and Research experience in a recognised University plus 8 Research Publications in Journals of International repute. or Ph.D. with 15 years Teaching and Research experience in a recognised University plus 8 Research publications in journals of International repute.
Associate Professor (Government and Politicis of Pakistan)	Master's Degree with 13 years Teaching and Research experience in a recognised University or professional experience in the field in a National or International Organization plus 5 Research Publications in Journals of International repute or Ph.D. in — with 10 years Teaching experience in a recognised University plus 5 Research Publications in Journals of International repute.
	Send applications alongwith Bio-data copies of testimonials . . . .

The reader will notice the atrocious English of this advertisement. Some words carry capital letters, others don't.

Thus no university teacher is obliged to write a book; the statutes as they stand rule out even an expectation of such an achievement. The articles required of him are left undefined. You can write an outstanding piece of research, analysis and re-interpretation which will become a landmark in the literature of your discipline, or you can prepare a pedestrian descriptive narrative based on secondary sources and of no academic value whatsoever. The same journal may publish both, because sometimes even the best journals show an uneven level of quality. There are cases of a review article making a major contribution to knowledge, but there is no place for it in the rules. The emphasis on "research" is an absurdity that exposes the ignorance of those who run the universities.

A few concrete examples will show this. A detailed, profound and original paper on "The Meaning of History" or "What History Teaches Us?" or "What is a Historical Fact?" may be a work of independent thinking and wide learning, but since it has no footnotes and long quotations from other writings it does not qualify as "research". An article discusses the question "Would Pakistan have been created if Jinnah had died in 1945?" with deep insight, a clear mind and incisive arguments. It gives no references and uses to secondary sources (there are no primary sources here) in its support, because it is an analysis of events and not a narration. Of course, this is not "research". A lecturer, who has read more widely than a professor and thought deeply on the implications of the creation of Pakistan for the Islamic world, writes an interpretation of the event which has all the virtues of historical scholarship at its best — clarity, vision, understanding, poise, commanding reasoning, flashes of original thought. He quotes no authority, refers to no books, furnishes no bibliography; but he uses his mind. It is published in a leading American journal. Our universities will not accept it for his promotion: it is not "research".

The ultimate height of the stupidity of this rule is attained in the following hypothetical case. An Englishman applies for a full professorship at a certain university of Pakistan. He has a doctorate from Oxford. He has taught at his own university for 25 years, where he now holds a distinguished chair in his subject. He is also a Fellow of All Souls. He has published 12 books, all of them well received by

the world scholarly community, 5 of them are by now classics. It is a pure accident that he has not published an article in his life, though the editor of every outstanding journal has been begging him for one; but his books were taking up all his time and he could not oblige the importunate editors. The Pakistani university will not even *entertain* his application, not to speak of considering it, because he does not fulfil the basic and minimum qualification laid down in the advertisement for the post: 8 research articles or papers.

The irony is that, if he cared to inquire, he would find out that the university which has returned his application marked "does not qualify" has given professorships to some of his old students who had taken years and years to finish their doctoral work, who had not published any book in thirty years, not even their Ph.D. thesis, and who had not written even the required 8 articles. How will the rejected candidate react? Let the reader pause, and ponder on our madness.

The rules are also vague, to the convenience of everybody in the university. They do not clarify if a published Ph.D. thesis will be accepted as a substitute for the 5 papers prescribed for the associate professorship. If it will be accepted, then an assistant professor (who usually has a Ph.D.) need not take pen in hand for ten years, just go on publishing chapters from his thesis at regular intervals, and he will be fully qualified for the next rank. This subterfuge could have been stopped by adding "after obtaining his Ph.D. degree" at the suitable place in the rules.

The condition that the articles or papers must have appeared in a "journal of international repute" also suits the university if left as it stands. Who will decide the quality of the journal? Is there a list of such journals for each discipline kept in the university office or in the Ministry of Education? Does any Pakistani journal fall in this eminent category? What is "international repute"? Such questions are left to the decision and discretion of the referees, though the vice-chancellor has many ways of conveying his wishes to these external judges.

Some universities, in order to add prestige to their names, appoint referees from abroad, generally from American universities; but this is no guarantee of impartiality or integrity. I personally know a case where, as a referee, I had to return the papers to the university on the ground that the applicant was a relative of mine

and known to be so. In fact, he was not qualified to apply under the rules. Two months later he got the full professorship, with one favourable report from a referee from the University of Columbia (I don't know who the other referee was). I discovered that the vice-chancellor wanted the man to be promoted and the Columbia professor wished to be invited to the Pakistani university with all the privileges of a guest. In my next meeting with the American expert I mentioned this case and was told that promotion papers from Pakistan were dealt with in keeping with the standards and practices of the country. He showed no embarrassment when I made an oblique reference to the injustice and professional improbity at which he had connived.

Since then I have seen more serious offences committed by provincial governments who control their universities. Several professors have been granted extension in service after the age of retirement. None of them had published a book, some of them not even an article. Presumably the university was rewarding them for their extraordinary performance — extraordinary, indeed!

I have gone into this matter at some length because the issues of qualifications and appointments impinge directly on the scholarship we are entitled to expect from the departments of history in the universities. The largest circle from which research and publication should have come in the normal course has thus excused itself from the burden (and the rewards) of writing national history. But, is it just to blame the university teachers for a fault not entirely their own? It is their employers who have told them that research is only a small part of their statutory duties, and that their continuity in service and promotion depend on other things. Then, why should they tire themselves in the performance of a duty from which a generous providence has set them free? The blame lies on the master, not on the slave. But I sometimes wonder if it has ever occurred to the deputation which saw Mr. Abdul Hafeez Pirzada in Islamabad that by forcing the Government to agree to such rules they had, for God knows how many years to come, condemned the universities to sterility, obloquy and shame.

The universities have abridged the role of research in their departments of history (and all other subjects), but they are still obliged to run a number of research institutes and study centres, where research and writing are supposed to be the primary functions. The performance of these institutions has been far from

satisfactory, and the responsibility lies solely on those who head them. At one university there are two such centres (one on Pakistan and one on South Asia), and for several years both were headed by the full-time Vice-Chancellor who had not yet put his name on the title-page of a book, while the person who actually looked after the centres was a Ph.D. student at the same university. On his retirement the Vice-Chancellor took over as a full-time director of both centres, still without having written a book. At another university, there was till last year a director of an institute and a full professor who had neither earned a doctorate, nor written a book, nor published any articles. Then there are Area Study Centres and "centres of excellence" and centres of other titles and descriptions, and most of them have been headed by persons whose qualifications should have taken them elsewhere[1].

Our universities may not count research and writing among the duties of a teacher, but certainly they still recognize (I hope) teaching as a work that he must do to earn his keep. What kind of history is taught at the universities, and in what manner? A good part of the answer is supplied by the textbooks and suggested readings in use. A few other oddities and wonders may be noticed.

Archaeology, which is the mother of history as a discipline, has no department to itself, except at Peshawar. On the undergraduate level the subject does not exist. Further, no university teaches historiography, theory of history and philosophy of history competently or seriously and as a compulsory part of the syllabus. Both the theory and the philosophy of history are essential training grounds for understanding history. We can't understand without asking questions. The theory teaches us how to ask them and why. It discusses the nature and meaning and dimensions of "fact", and tells us how a historical fact can be very different from a material fact or a philosophical fact. History is made up of facts, but who has seen or experienced facts? Only the contemporary witness. All others have borrowed their knowledge of the fact from him. All history is second hand. But in taking or borrowing facts, each historian has added something to them, subtracted something from them, viewed them from a different angle, put them in a different context — in one

1. The non-university research institutions of history, some of which are national in stature and importance, have been, for the most part, headed by non-historians or scholars whose merit and published work would not get them a lectureship in an obscure European university.

word, reinterpreted them. What we call history is a jumble of facts arranged and re-arranged, interpreted and re-interpreted, by a large number of writers. What the eye-witnesses had seen and reported or chronicled is buried, almost unrecognizably, under the heap of glosses and commentaries and translations and selections and omissions.

Is the historical fact the truth? What is the truth? Is it what one saw with one's own eyes or heard at first hand and directly? Can an eye-witness render an exact report or description of what he has seen? Is there not a good possibility that in reporting what he saw he will, unconsciously and perhaps in spite of his resolve to be truthful, let his bias or opinion or conviction or commitment colour his description? He will report the incident from his own point of view. That is inevitable and unavoidable. Add up all the interpretations put on the original reported "fact" by the generations of chroniclers, and what we have today is not the historical truth but what we may call the historical fact. Fact and truth are not the same things. What I call a fact may not be true history. What I call truthful history may not be based on facts.

As every history is an interpretation, every historian's work is a new history, a fresh look at facts. Given the same theme, the same source material and the same terms of reference, ten historians writing at the same point of time will produce vastly different accounts. As every age stands at a vantage point different from every other age, it will produce its own history and interpret the past in its own way.

Thus, if every age and every historian writes history afresh, there is no such thing as standard history, true history, or accepted history. Every period and every writer views the past, ancient, modern or recent, in its or his own image. There is no escape from it. Even in the rigidly ideological states of Israel and U.S.S.R each generation has been re-writing the national history. For two hundred years France has been engaged in intrepreting the greatest phenomenon of her modern past, the Revolution. From Alexis de Tocqueville to Francois Furet (1989) every historian has made his own assessment of the cataclysmic event and its contribution to French thought, life and politics. Foreign commentators from Burke and Carlyle to Simon Schama (1989) have participated in this grand debate. The task of interpretation and discussion will continue as long as mankind lives. No State or government or society has ever

ordered an end to such debates or declared one interpretation as the standard or official history.

By refusing to teach the theory of history, preferably at the undergraduate level, the Pakistani unversities have become major partners in a conspiracy of silence. The young student, in his third year in the college, should begin his serious study of history simultaneously with a course on the theoretical framework of historical knowledge. He should be asking basic questions on what is history? What is a fact? What is true history? What is an interpretation? as he is reading an account of what happened. He should be taught to examine and investigate at least the broad aspects of what is presented to him as history. He should be trained to be critical, to perceive the inner movement of events, to view each development in its context, to question the given interpretation, to disagree with the book, to interrogate his teacher, and to refuse to accept the authority of the printed word without a debate.

In the absence of this training, he becomes a passive recipient, not an active receiver, of what is fed to him; he collects information, he does not gain knowledge; he is a captive audience of a monologue, not a participant in a discussion. His study should be a dialogue between the book and his mind, not an empty exercise in swallowing prescribed assertions. He should be treated as what he is: a student who has come to the college to develop his mind; not as an empty vessel into which some pearls of received wisdom are to be poured. He is there to study the past, not to memorize a chronicle; to learn history, not a dogma; to understand himself in the perspective of the bygone ages, not to be told the official version of history; to see his present as an extension of his past so that he can visualize his future, not to be regaled with stories of a glorious past and official versions of the present and pleasent hopes of a great future. He has come to master a discipline, not to be admitted into a new church.

The consequences of teaching history without its theory are disastrous. The student arrives with a vacant mind, he leaves with an empty one.

This determination to teach him history in a vacuum does not stop here. It extends to a blinding blackout of all dimensions of history except the political. As an undergraduate, the student is not permitted even a glimmer of the various factors which lie behind and

mould the political developments. When he is reading for the master's degree, he is given no opportunity to study social, economic and intellectual history. For him history has only one dimension: the political. This uni-dimensional approach leads to a view of history which is imperfect, incomplete, incredibly distorted and totally meaningless. Let me illustrate this by a consideration of how the creation of Pakistan is taught in the colleges and the universities.

On all levels, events are mentioned in their bare loneliness, political developments are recounted, a few selected personalities are said to have played a major part, the hostility of the Hindus and the Indian National Congress is referred to, and the negotiations with the British are dealt with briefly. There are a few paragraphs or pages on Muslim rule in India, highlighting only its more favourable aspects. In the officially prepared and prescribed textbook, which every undergraduate in every discipline (arts, science, engineering, medicine, agriculture, law) must study and be examined in, there are short, abrupt and incoherent chapters on the role of the students in the Pakistan movement, the role of the *ulema*, the role of the journalists, and so on (only those in the movement). The creation of Pakistan and the winning of independence are attributed solely to the All India Muslim League (as it was between 1940 and 1947) and Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. There are a few short paragraphs, at places a few lines, recalling the 1857 "war of independence", the Aligarh movement, the foundation of the Muslim League, the annulment of the partition of Bengal, the Khilafat agitation, the Hindu-Muslim riots, Iqbal's Allahabad address, the Round Table Conference, separate electorates, the 1935 Act, and the Lahore Resolution. On the M.A. level exactly the same pattern is followed, with more pages to read, longer repetitions, greater emphasis on the more "positive" achievements of the movement, and higher praise of the leadership.

All students, from standard One to the finals in the M.A. class, have this stuff pushed down their throat for sixteen years. Some of them become civil servants of various grades, and carry this information into their careers. A few take to school teaching, and all over the land the tender impressionable minds are brainwashed with the same doctrine on which they themselves were brought up. A fewer number are appointed to lecture in history, political science and Pakistan Studies at colleges and universities, charged with the duty of producing copies of themselves. This last group's existence is

an assurance of undefiled perpetuation of a view of national history which is uncritical, undocumented, romantic and deeply satisfying. The cycle goes on from year to year and decade to decade, producing robots instead of thinking graduates.

The Pakistan movement of 1940-47 did not strike out its first shoot in a virgin soil in March 1940. The field had been ploughed and worked and watered for many years before that. The roots were deep and long, many of them connecting the visible trunk with the Afghan and Mughal ages of history, some even linking it with pre-Muslim Indian history and culture. The Pakistan movement was the culmination of several centuries of history and culture and of several decades of politics. It was the end-product of a much longer Muslim nationalist movement, which in its turn had many bonds of sympathy and empathy with the larger and older Indian nationalist movement. As a manifestation of nationalism, this movement had dealt, bartered, negotiated and fought with two other national movements: the British and the Hindu. This part or aspect of the movement makes up our political and constitutional history.

But the political goals of protection, safeguards and finally separation were rooted in the social and economic conditions and problems of the community. The poverty of the Muslims, their backwardness in material development, their status as the proletariat serving the non-Muslim capitalist system, their relative absence from the professional classes, the tension and stress caused by a poor nation being led by its wealthy and dominantly landholding elite, their failure to join the industrial and entrepreneur classes, their inability, caused by poor education, to compete with the Hindus for government employment — this was the social *milieu* in which Muslim nationalism grew up and came to maturity. This forms the social and economic dimension of our nationalism, which cannot be studied outside social and economic history, and without which our students can neither see the underpinnings of the nationalist struggle nor relate Pakistan's contemporary problems with the past.

There is still a very important side of the nationalist movement — perhaps the most significant — of which political history takes no notice. What made the Indian Muslim what he was? What shaped his mentality? What moulded his thought and convictions, his beliefs and commitments, his prejudices and predilections, his ideas and opinions, his habits and traditions, his way of life? Political history has no answers to these questions; the

cultural history has. His culture determined his politics; his politics did not change his culture. Consider these things: the faith and practice of Islam, links with the Islamic world, use of Islamic languages (Arabic, Persian, Turkish), the birth of Urdu, the traditions of the Mughal courtly life, the training in *maktabs* and *madrasas*, the riches of Muslim literature, the impact of sufi ideas, the interest in Islamic art, Muslim personal law, dietary preferences and inhibitions, customs associated with birth, marriage and death, family life, status of women, the script of the languages, passion for poetry, individuality in dress, the shape of houses, the design of the mosque — the list is unending. His educational ideals, literary tastes and intellectual interests set him apart from the other Indians.

In other words, there was in India an Islamic or Muslim culture, which drew such a sharp line between the Muslim and the non-Muslim that neither political compromises nor constitutional concordats nor social mingling could erase it. The line became a divide, and dictated a physical separation.

To write and teach this cultural history we will have to summon special help from our fund of honesty and forbearance, because this involves answering some simple but controversial questions. A Muslim culture born in a predominantly non-Muslim society could not be completely Islamic. Muslims, despite their status and position of imperial rulers, could not isolate themselves from their surroundings. Several centuries of living together was bound to create a few shared values and some common interests. In its history of expansion Islam has always borrowed or accepted or tolerated something or a great deal from the culture and practices of the people it conquered or converted; even in its original home it took over into its system of beliefs and ritual several things from pre-Islamic Arabia, Judaism and Chistianity. Egyptian and Syrian Muslims have an Arab culture, which shows in its everyday manifestations many Christian influences. Indonesian culture has been deeply marked by Hinduism. Thus, in some of its aspects Indian Muslim culture was a synthesis of Islam and local history, traditions, religion, geography, civilization and values.

The relevance of a careful study of our cultural background to the problem of determining the contours and contents of Pakistani culture is self-evident. Views will clash and opposite theories will be propounded. Politics will inevitably intrude into the debate. The conservative "nationalist" historian will not even discuss the

possibility of a Hindu element in Pakistani culture. Was Pakistan not created, he will point out, because Hindus and Muslims had nothing in common? His critic will cite the history of India of the last 1,200 years, the impact of Hindi on Urdu and of Sanskrit on Muslim Bangla, Hindu influence in the Mughal court, the amount of Hindu blood running in the veins of the Mughal emperors, the Sufi doctrine of universal tolerance, and a hundred other things which were born of Hindu-Muslim interaction. The discussion is on its way.

The geography of the partition of India added another complication to the cultural debate. Many of our cultural centres and landmarks were left behind in India (and some more now lie in another foreign country, Bangladesh). The All India Muslim League was dominated by the United Provinces' elite, and a general impression was created that Muslim culture owed everything to the U.P. and Delhi areas. This false or dangerous notion is still current; false because it dismisses all the regions now constituting Pakistan, and dangerous because it caused the secession of East Pakistan. This impression was elevated into a dogma by the U.P. and Delhi migrants to Karachi, who wanted to dominate Pakistani culture as they had dominated the All India Muslim League (without noticing the contradiction involved in their abandoning the home of their culture in favour of a country whose native culture they despised).

Thus Pakistan was subjected to the double yoke of an Aligarh imperialism and an Urdu colonialism, both more aggressive and rampant than British imperialism and English (language) colonialism. Aggressive, because this time the foreign imperialists had the same colour of skin as the Pakistani and because they claimed to be natives not foreigners (though they *were* foreigners, and also more haughty than the British). Rampant, partly because the complex-ridden Punjab chose to stand up in their support (thus annoying and alienating the smaller provinces), and partly because the country, in desperate search of a national language, decided in favour of Urdu (thus driving East Pakistan out of the federation). About 8 per cent of the population of Pakistan, now beginning to call itself a separate nationality, wants to impose its language and culture on the other 92 per cent. All of them have migrated to Pakistan in the last 30-40 years, all have refused to learn any Pakistani language and are therefore ignorant of the literature existing in local languages and of its superiority to anything that Urdu has produced, and all are creating an explosive political situation in the country.

Why are they doing it? Only a careful and detailed study of our cultural history can supply the answer.

The reader will now realize how imperative it is to teach social and cultural history. To continue to teach the political element alone (and even that incompetently and with a built-in bias) is to refuse to see the past in the round. Politics may be likened to the skin of a human body. We can see the man by it, recognize him as belonging to this race or that, and *sometimes* read the state of his health. It is a covering, a dress, a garb; the real thing lies under it: the machinery that keeps the man alive. The machinery is made of several components: brain, heart, lungs, liver, kidney, etc. Life depends upon these vital organs, not on the colour or thickness or clarity of the skin. Likewise, a people live in accordance with the state of health of their internal organs: social traditions, economic practices, intellectual activities, cultural values.

Let me use a different metaphor. A building stands on the strength of its foundations, pillars, roofs and walls. The foundations are history, the pillars are social traditions, the roofs are economic principles, the walls are intellectual achievements. The form and shape, the architecture, are the cultural lineaments. The outer paint, colour and wash are the politics. Neither the owner, nor the prospective buyer, nor the casual passer-by, will judge the building by the quality, shade, or freshness of the distemper.

It is a great pity that our history teaching attaches no importance to social and cultural history. It has no place at all in the undergraduate syllabus. In the universities it is dismissed with a few short chapters, more often with a blank. As generally Pakistani historians only write what can be useful to the students, and since social and cultural history is not on the curriculum, it is not written about. There are a few political historians, but of social, economic and cultural historians we have none.

There is another defect in our history teaching which, to begin with, may be only a pedagogic malpractice, but ultimately it affects the quality of the graduates and through them the approach and understanding of the historians. All undergraduate teaching is done in the colleges, but it is the universities which lay down the curricula and syllabi, hold the examinations and award the degrees. Therefore the universities are to be held responsible for the point I now wish to make.

History is not studied as a subject in combination with allied or related disciplines. Had our higher education system been like that obtaining in Europe, we could have followed the foreign practice and produced graduates with honours in a particular subject or with a degree in one subject. But the subject combinations allowed in our colleges at the B.A. level produce a chaos instead of a system. An undergraduate can choose any two subjects (plus English) as long as they are either from among the natural and physical sciences or from among the social sciences, humanities and arts. If he wants history to be one of his subjects, he is free to combine it with Arabic, geography, Persian, philosophy, psychology, education, economics, political science, Islamic Studies, fine arts, Urdu, English literature, French language or what else is available at his college.

His own choice is determined by two factors or rather expectations: first, which combination would be of greater use in the civil service competitive test at which most graduates want to try their luck; secondly, which other subject is reputed to bring more marks in the B.A. examination (it is generally believed, and rightly, that the courses are easier and the examiners more generous in Urdu, Persian, Arabic and education, and that high scoring is possible in mathematics and statistics). Some students prefer history because, as it it taught here, it is a straightforward subject, without any practical work as in education or fine arts, without any theories to master as in economics, without any recondite matter to be comprehended as in philosophy, and, above all, the easiest to learn by rote. Another attraction is that if you study history you need not devote any time or labour to the preparation of the minor but compulsory paper on Pakistan Studies, which is nothing but very elementary history.

The universities abolished the honours system many years ago, for reasons neither demanded nor given. Under the old system a student could take up honours in any one of his three subjects, and it involved preparing for three more papers (in addition to the two carried by every pass subject) in his honours subject. This extra work, carried on at a respectably high level, added much to his knowledge, tested his ability, earned him the prestige of an honours degree, improved his qualification for a job, and increased his chances of doing well in his M.A. examination if his M.A. subject was the same in which he had taken honours (which it invariably

was). The abolition of this system deprived the undergraduate of an opportunity to show his preference, to read further in the subject of his special interest, to try to prove his superiority over his "pass" class-fellows, and to prepare for his post-graduate work.

In the present-day non-honours system, the least that the universities should have done is to rationalize the subject combination. There must be some relationship, academic or causal, between the two subjects the student takes up for study. If he selects history and Urdu, it needs no wisdom to see that he is not serious about either. When the students don't use their mind, they should be guided. The universities ought to name the subjects which may be taken in combination. For example, history should be permitted to be studied in conjunction with economics or political science or philosophy, but not with French or statistics or Arabic or education. By failing to do this, the universities are allowing history to be studied in a vacuum, unrelated to germane fields, and divorced from other disciplines which share its substance and approach — with the result that the history student loses a good opportunity of better understanding his subject with the help of an allied discipline.

In passing, it may be mentioned that it is impossible in Pakistan to study law in combination with any subject whatsoever. Law is considered a technical field, a professional specialization, for the study of which there are separate law colleges which teach nothing but law. Moreover, one can join the law college only after graduation. There is no department of law in any university. In most places, even the building of the law college is not situated on the campus. There are absolutely no dealings between the law teachers and the university dons (though the law college is a part of and under the control of the university). A similar sentence of excommunication has been passed by the University of the Punjab against the departments of Persian, Arabic, Urdu and Punjabi, which exist and function in a separate colony of untouchables called the Punjab University Oriental College. Why? For Heaven's sake, why?

Several results follows — all detracting from the quality and opportunity of the education offered by the universities. An undergraduate cannot study law, and is therefore unable to combine what he is reading with a knowledge of law, however desirable that may be. A law student is debarred from reading law in conjunction with allied subjects (apart from what he had earlier studied for his B.A. examination). A post-graduate student reading political science

or history or philosophy (all the three having a deep interest in law) has no law in his syllabus, cannot attend lectures on law, and does not find any law books in his library. When a distinguished lawyer or judge delivers a lecture at the Law College the university teachers and students don't even know of the event. Conversely, when an outside historian comes to the university to speak on feudalism in Europe or a political scientist to address an audience on the constitutional problems of Pakistan or a philosopher to discuss Plato's dialogue on *Laws*, the Law College faculty and student body are neither invited nor even informed. Moreover, there is no sharing of teaching between the Law College and the university departments.

Frustration of a like order is the portion of those dons or students who have the misfortune or the folly of having an interest in their own literature or in oriental studies. Fulfilment is beyond their reach. A visiting scholar may be lecturing on Sayyid Ahmad Khan's *Tahzib-ul-Akhlaq*, a professor of Oriental College may be speaking on Abul Kalam Azad as a journalist, another lecturer may be giving a course on Zafar Ali Khan and *The Zamindar*, or on the Urdu Press of the Punjab, or on the poetry inspired by the 1857 events, or on the historical novels of Abdul Halim Sharar, or on the Punjab's role in the origin of the Urdu language, or on the meaning of Iqbal's *Javidnama* — all topics of essential interest to, and parts of the courses pursued by, the university students of history, political science, philosophy and Islamic Studies — but these lectures and addresses are supposed to be meant for the Oriental College alone or to be its own business.

A similar lack of contact or intercourse exists among the university departments which function and are situated on the same campus. University teaching in the West, and at some other enlightened places also, is an inter-disciplinary and inter-departmental enterprise. This helps everyone. Every department does not have experts on all the courses it wants to teach; so it asks someone at another department to come and take charge of it. Then there are certain papers or parts of a course which are better taught by a scholar from another discipline. Take a few examples. Political philosophy is taught by a philosopher, not a political scientist. Constitutional and international law are taught by a man from the department of law, not by a political scientist. Political thought of Islam is left to an Islamist, not to a philosopher or a political

scientist. Karl Marx's philosophy may be the responsibility of an expert in the history of economic thought from the department of economics or of someone from the department of philosophy who has specialized in nineteenth century European philosophy or of a political scientist who has written a good book on Communism — the task is allotted to anyone of these who is available and willing.

History teaching is in the greatest need of, and profits most from, such collaboration, because its field is so large and its sweep so wide that even a well-staffed department cannot teach all the courses it wants to, competently, to the satisfaction of the students, and covering all the compulsory and optional papers on offer. Only a scholar of recognized merit in his field should lecture on his field. Ideally (and in most European universities the ideal is the practice), only that lecturer should take charge of a paper on which he has published two or three books.

Given these desirable goals, inter-departmental collaboration becomes necessary. Take the history of modern India as the case in point. Look at its various aspects and dimensions and periods. Consider the economic, religious constitutional, educational, political, cultural, social, intellectual and regional contents of what you have to teach. Common sense demands that no reliance can be placed on picking up one of the lecturers, asking him to read a few books and prepare some notes, and ordering him to start teaching from the first of October. A good student will immediately gauge the depth of the man's knowledge or more often the ignorance. If this is done to all the courses, the entire teaching will fall to pieces, you will have over-worked and frustrated lecturers and unsatisfied and resentful students, examination results will carry the tale, and the reputation of the university will dip and disappear. But this is exactly how our universities go about their task of teaching history.

Now consider the alternative. The department teaches only what it can, leaving the rest to colleagues from the neighbourhood. (In what it teaches by itself, too, it may invite outside scholars to supplement its own efforts). In the political history paper, the constitutional developments are taught by a man from political science. If there is a paper on constitutional history, it is allotted to the Law College. Part of social history is done by the house staff, part is left to a group of an anthropologist, a sociologist and an economist. Cultural history is shared by several colleagues: the concept of culture is explained by someone from the sociology

department, literature is taught by a man from the Oriental College, education by one from the Education Department, art by one from the Fine Arts Department, religious thought by an Islamist, philosophical thought by a philosopher, the theory of history and the philosophy of history also by a philosophy man; in this paper, the department's own lecturer should confine his work to co-ordination, the joining of threads, speaking on some broad themes, and taking the seminars.

In Islamic history the department can enlist the help from further afield. Scientists can be invited to lecture on Islam's contribution to their disciplines, engineers on its history of technology, archaeologists on its ancient remains, doctors of medicine on its achievements in their field, scholars of Persian, Turkish and Arabic on its literature, and musicians on its classical science and practice of melody. But this is only possible if all the faculties teaching these subjects are a part of the university system and function on the same campus. Unless our centres of higher learning become universities in the proper sense, maintaining faculties covering all fields of instruction, teaching from the undergraduate level upwards, imparting knowledge instead of information, and giving equal attention to teaching and research, the programme outlined above will remain an unfulfilled dream.

The last area of darkness in our historical teaching and research to which I wish to refer is regional history. I don't mean area studies, in which the historical component is very slight, and for which all our universities are running completely useless centres. Pakistan must be the only country in the world which can afford to have study centres on American, Latin American, European, North African and Central Asian history and economics and politics and what not, but does not have facilities for collecting, passing on and interpreting substantial and correct information on its own provinces and regions. With the exception of the Institute of Sindhology in Jamshoro, there is no institution, centre or academy in the other three provinces which collects material, conducts research and publishes studies on the province. Preferably as a part of the province's leading university, such a place can serve several purposes, all badly ignored so far.

First, it will seek, locate, gather and preserve in its library every scrap of information on the history of the province. Nothing should escape its attention or net, not even trivia, like pamphelts,

posters, playcards, leaflets, flags, which can be of so much help to a historian in describing the atmosphere of a period or movement. It will make a special effort to acquire gazetteers, maps, administration and settlement reports, official proceedings, legislative debates, local government papers, provincial laws and statutes, and records in Britain and India which relate to provincial history. Items which are available in national or foreign collections and cannot be purchased should be photocopied. As many of the provincial newspapers, magazines and journals as possible, in the original or on microfilm, should be acquired. It should also look for all economic and social data, like revenue papers, trade figures, industrial statistics, annual budgets, economic reports, social surveys, demographic studies, census reports and development plans. On the cultural side, it will collect everything from folk songs and village handicrafts to epic poetry and classical literature, old music, educational facts and figures, religious studies, ethnic surveys, objects of art, and material on the provincial languages and dialects. It should also have an extensive gallery of pictures and photographs depicting the area's past and present.

With all this material, to which much more can be added, and a team of scholars coming from different disciplines, the institute can edit documents, prepare bibliographies and chronologies, and produce in-depth studies in all branches of history. No national history (of Muslim India or of Pakistan) can be written till these provincial institutes have done a good part of their work. Only when the historians have before them competent and scholarly accounts of all the provinces can they start the larger work of preparing national histories.

One great advantage accruing from these provincial efforts will be that the spotlight of inquiry will be focussed on many minor turnings and crossways in the history of the province. National historians and scholars of one province are apt, for good reasons of lack of material and want of interest, to overlook much that is relevant, even crucial, to the development and history of another province. Examples of such *minutiae* are not difficult to list.

I will take the Punjab which is more familiar to me: histories of towns which have an important past (e.g., Chiniot, Jhang, Bahawalpur, Pakpattan, Sialkot, Multan); histories of institutions which have played a significant role in modern politics, education, society and culture (e.g., Government College, Aitchison College,

Islamia College and Oriental College, all of Lahore, University of the Punjab, Gymkhana Club, Punjab Club, Anjuman-i-Hamayat-i-Islam, Punjab League, Halqa-i-Arbab-i-Zauq); histories of buildings and landmarks (e.g., shrines of Multan, the tombs of Hir and Ranjha in Jhang, Badshahi Mosque, Wazir Khan Mosque, Shalimar Garden, Barkat Ali Muhammadan Hall, and the city gates of Lahore); histories of political parties (e.g., the Punjab Muslim League, Punjab Muslim Students' Federation, Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, Khaksar movement, Punjab National Unionist Party); histories of provincial newspapers (e.g., *The Lahore Chronicle, The Civil and Military Gazette, The Tribune, The Paisa Akhbar, Zamindar, Inqilab, Wakil, Ehsan*); histories of major Urdu journals (e.g., *Adab-i-Latif, Humayun, Makhzan, Alamgir, Adabi Duniya, Nairing-i-Khyal, Ruman, Hazardastan*); histories of prominent families (e.g., the Mians of Baghbanpura, the Tiwanas of Shahpur, the Daulatanas, the Noons, the Legharis, the Jamalis, the Hayats of Wah, the Qureshis of Multan, the Sials of Montgomery (Sahiwal), the Qizilbashes of Lahore, the Gurmanis of Muzaffargarh, the Nawabs of Bahawalpur); biographical studies of influential persons (e.g., Sir Abdul Qadir, Malik Barkat Ali, Ghulam Rasul Mihr, Abdul Majid Salik, Sayyid Abdul Latif (the historian of Lahore and the Punjab), Salahuddin Ahmad, Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Chaudhri Sir Shahabuddin, Mian Abdul Hayee, Justice Shah Din, Mian Bashir Ahmad, Khizr Hayat Tiwana, Sikandar Hayat Khan, Raja Ghazanfar Ali, Mian Muhammad Shafi, Mian Abdul Aziz); critical studies of men of letters and poets (e.g., Waris Shah, Sultan Bahu, Bulleh Shah, Baba Farid, Hafiz Mahmud Shirani, Akhtar Shirani, Ahmad Shah Bukhari Patras, Hafeez Hoshiarpuri, Yusuf Zafar, Nasir Kazmi, Mukhtar Siddiqui, Miraji); studies of political and administrative institutions (e.g., Punjab Legislative Council and Assembly, Punjab Chief Court and High Court, Punjab Secretariat, Punjab Civil Service, Lahore Municipality and Corporation, local government system, district administration); studies of agricultural nature (e.g., canal system, revenue administration, water supply, farm marketing, co-operative societies, zamindara banks); social and economic relations, practices and institutions (e.g., legal profession, feudal system, rise of the middle class, caste system, *baradari* relationship, village life, rural development, internal migration, electrification, expansion of education, railway system, health facilities); etc., etc.

This random and very incomplete list indicates the immensity of the work yet to be done. Most of it must become the responsibility of the provincial historian. The national historian tends to concentrate on the wider scene and has less or little interest in the affairs of the provinces. Scholars belonging to other provinces have their own priorities, interests and handicaps. It is quite natural that they should want to work on their own areas. It is also understandable that their primary interest lies in their own history and institutions. It is also clear that they are better equipped to study the area and problems with which they are familiar. Then the language problem creates barriers. A Punjabi must learn Pashto to be able to study Khushhal Khan Khattak or the history of the tribal belt or the Red Shirts movement. The Sindhi scholar must master the Punjabi language before he writes anything on Waris Shah's *Hir* or the village life or the middle class of the province. The Pathan historian cannot be a specialist on Sind unless he attains a high level of proficiency not only in the Sindhi language but also in the art of understanding the mind and culture of a different people.

These considerations mean one thing: we must have strong provincial cadres of historians working for several years in their own fields and publishing their findings. Only when the fruits of their labour are available will the national historians have sufficient data and knowledge to write comprehensive and broad studies. This must not be taken by the national historian of any province as a licence to do nothing but wait for the flow of books to start arriving from his provincial colleagues. In the meantime, he can utilize whatever is available in the archives to write on the Muslim League and the larger nationalist movement. What I am emphasizing is the urgent need for creating, encouraging and strengthening regional studies in and outside the universities.

CHAPTER 4

THE THICKET OF LANGUAGES: THE MEDIUM OF HISTORY

The historian has to be a linguist. The nature of his profession makes this demand. The number of languages he must learn depends on three things: the language(s) in which he writes, the language(s) in which his source material is available, and the language(s) in which most of the literature in his field appears.

Oriental Languages

From this point of view the modern historian comes under the greatest pressure. All the original sources of medieval Indian history (the Sultanate and Mughal periods) are in the Persian language, and very little work has been done on this age in any European language (except by the Indian historians in English). The rare scholar who wants to read Babur in the original might like to learn Chughtai Turkish. The cultural and intellectual historian will have to master Arabic in order to consult the vast amount of work done in India on theology, exegesis, *hadith*, *fiqh* and Islamic philosophy. But for the political historian Persian alone should suffice.

The modern historian's linguistic equipment must be much heavier. The modern period, by which I mean the years 1701-1947, is a complex age in every sense. Till 1857 the Mughal and the British authorities run side by side and at some times and places overlap. The major development for the historian is a new language in which

source material begins to appear, first by driblets, then in sheeted rain even on the Indian side (all major political parties used English), and finally in a gush. The alteration from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century touches every conceivable dimension. When the eighteenth turns into the nineteenth, the Indian world has been turned upside-down.

From then onwards, Persian ceased to be the only language of history. On the one hand, it shared its dominant position with English, the tongue of the new rulers; and as time passed its share waned, though in education and literature it continued to play an important but progressively diminishing part till 1947. On the other hand, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of Urdu as a language of incipient poetry, then gradually of education, and of religious and political prose. By the end of the nineteenth century it grew to a position where the mind and political ambitions of the Muslims were mostly expressed in its medium. A third development introduced more languages into the political and cultural *milieu* of India. Political prose, epic and sufi poetry and vernacular newspapers and journals appeared in several regional languages, the most important being in Bengali, Sindhi, Punjabi, Pashto, and the various languages of the South.

The mass of the source material for this period in political, constitutional and economic history is in the English language; so are the entire official records down to the tehsil level of revenue and settlement, and all papers relating to administration, education, engineering, agriculture, health and the army. A great majority of the national, and some important provincial, newspapers are in English. With the exception of three or four religious groups which played no significant role in all-India politics, all political parties and trade unions used English as their official language. Proceedings of all legislative councils and assemblies are printed in English, even if, as it happened in the earliest years, some members of the Governor General's Legislative Council delivered their speeches in one of the major native languages.

And yet, knowledge of English alone is not enough to study modern developments. Source material on several topics and themes and movements is either wholly or partially in Urdu, Persian and Arabic or in one of the provincial languages. Many examples come to mind. The entire message and intimations of reform given by Shah Waliullah and his Delhi school are available only in Persian

and Arabic, so are the writings and reports of Sayyid Ahmad Barelawi's Mujahidin movement. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the Indian side of the 1857 events expressed itself in Persian and Urdu; and the Aligarh movement records are in Urdu and English, while its leading figures wrote in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, and, in a very few cases, in English. Even in the twentieth century, when English seemed to be the universal medium of political debate, we have some significant movements and parties which conducted their affairs in Urdu: Khilafat movement, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, the Khaksar movement, and Jamaat-i-Islami. Further, all the Islamic schools and cultural centres, like the Deoband Dar-ul-Ulum, Nadwat-ul-Ulema and Madrasa Mazhar-ul-Ulum, taught, wrote, spoke and published in Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Finally, there is the Urdu literature and press, which is indispensable to any study of Muslim literary, intellectual, cultural and even political evolution.

But Muslim India did not speak out in Urdu alone. In the first place, there was an influential, flourishing and vocal Bengali, Sindhi and Madrasi press, which, though generally representing regional sentiment, reflected the views of strong provincial majorities and minorities. Secondly, there were certain provincial parties which played a not unimportant role even on the national level, like the Krishka Proja in Bengal and the Khudai Khidmatgars in the North-West Frontier Province, and which had adopted Bengali or Pashto as their medium of propaganda, activity and publication. No study of Muslim history can afford to ignore their existence. In order to study some important Hindu organizations of northern and central India the historian also needs some acquaintance with Hindi. The Hindu Mahasabha published a great deal in Hindi which has not been translated into English; some of Lala Lajpat Rai's and Bhai Parmanand's writings are in Hindi. In his earliest years in politics Jinnah occasionally spoke in Gujerati; he also published a few articles in his mother tongue. Gandhi employed Gujerati widely, and though all his writings and speeches have been well translated into English, a historian of undefiled purity might prefer to read him in the original. Besides, the decades-old Maharashtra awakening cannot be studied without a knowledge of Gujerati and Marhatti. Most of the literature on all significant political movements in the South is in Telugu, Canada and Malayalam.

In the light of these facts, we can see the advantages (in certain fields, the imperatives) of learning the maximum number of the Indian languages. It is a daunting prospect, but the rewards are rich: mastery over the primary source material, the first implement of the historian's craft.

There seems to be a general misconception among Pakistani historians writing in Urdu that they can do without English when they are studying purely Islamic or Muslim movements or parties. A little reflection will show how wrong they are.

Take the principal and the most notable seminary of Islamic learning, the Dar-ul-Ulum of Deoband. Of course, all its teaching, syllabi, curricula, research and publications were in Arabic, Persian and Urdu; most of its principals and scholars did not know English; and its official records are in Urdu. But only a formal, incomplete, narrow and unanalytical history of the school can be written on the basis of these sources. The school was one manifestation of Muslim response to the 1857 revolt (the other was the Aligarh movement), and its *raison d'etre* and outlook cannot be understood without a good knowledge of the Mutiny, of which all official and many unofficial records are in English. Similarly, the later rivalry between Aligarh and Deoband can only be studied if one knows enough about Aligarh, for which again English is necessary.

The Khilafat movement caused a major political-*cum*-religious upheaval in India. There were four parties or sides to the issue at the root of the agitation: the Ottoman (and later Turkish) authorities, the British government, the Indian Muslims, and the Indian National Congress. A close understanding of the backgrounds and motives of all these is indispensable to any investigation into the movement. The Ottoman-Turkish material is available only in Turkish (some of it has been translated into English and French). All the secret records and public statements of the British imperial government and the Government of India are in English. So are many of the speeches, petitions, addresses and momoranda of the Khilafat leaders. The Congress, which allied itself with the Central Khilafat Committee, conducted its affairs and proceedings in English. Some vital portions of the Khilafat records were kept in English; as far as I know, the speeches and addresses delivered in Europe by the Khilafat Delegation and the verbatim reports of the Delegation's interviews with the British ministers in London have not been translated into Urdu.

The Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind was a purely vernacular organization, both in the language it used and the politics it pursued. But it was a child of the earliest stirrings of the Khilafat issue, and throughout its career it reacted to the Turkish and British policies, and in the Indian context it made its cause common with the Congress. Therefore, to examine the Jamiat's origins and policies a knowledge of English is necessary. Similar considerations apply to parties like the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, the Khaksars, the Khudai Khidmatgars and the Jamaat-i-Islami.

For the purely local roots and everyday activities of all these movements and parties we need English as much as we need Urdu. Two kinds of contemporary and essential source material are only extant in English, though their origins may be Urdu or Pashto or Bengali or any other provincial tongue. All important public speeches, even when delivered on purely religious occasions and in the mosques, were reported by the agents of the Criminal Investigation Department to the district authorities, and detailed compilations of these verbatim reports were forwarded by the deputy commissioners to the provincial Home Secretaries and by them to the Chief Secretary and by him to the Home Department of the Government of India, and at their final destination they became a part of the permanent official archives.

These reports make fascinating reading. At the bigger public gatherings the speaker knew of the presence among his audience of some C.I.D. reporters, and he might or might not have softened his language or, in the case of a fiery and intrepid man like Hasrat Mohani or Muhammad Ali or Ataullah Shah Bukhari, measured out his assertions and threats in the precise gradation of strength in which he wanted to convey his message to the authorities. But, in all likelihood, the *mawlawi* or the religious demangogue speaking in a mosque did not suspect the house of worship to contain a police sub-inspector who listened to his utterances with such devoted concentration that directly after leaving the building he could put into writing as faithfully as possible every word that had been spoken; and the report was sent to his superiors over his signature.

Some of these speeches were reported in the Urdu newspapers, but by no means does that fact render the C.I.D. version superfluous. I have seen these police reports, and impressed by their quaint style and attention to detail, I selected about half a dozen C.I.D. reports relating to widely separated periods and

different parties and collated them with the press versions of the same speeches. The comparison paid valuable dividends. The policeman's report is more factual, registers the nuances more faithfully, sometimes puts the crucial words and phrases used by the speaker in their exact context, records the reaction of the audience, and tenders a truer estimate of the number of people present. When the official reporter indulges his bias, the slant is so obvious and unsophisticated that the historian, when interpreting the speech or setting the scene, can easily make an allowance for the reporter's coign of vantage.

The press reporter, on the other hand, is involved in the movement, either as a partisan or as a critic. If he is a supporter, he magnifies the importance of the occasion, overestimates the enthusiasm of the audience, puts the number of the public at a higher count, and exaggerates the impact of the speech. If he is an opponent, he paints the scene in greyer shades, depicts the audience as captive or bored, makes the crowd smaller, omits or abridges a few significant portions of the address, and plays down the importance of the whole exercise. I found the same contrast in the reporting of three different phases of politics: the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the Muslim League and the Khaksar meetings.

The police reports might have been submitted in Urdu at the original stage, but they reached the Government of India in English. In failing to consult them we are switching off a spotlight which illumines some important corners and turnings of contemporary developments.

There was an entirely different kind of secret reports sent by some politicians themselves who were in the pay of the provincial or central government. A gentleman of respectable antecedents and an honourable profession belonging to the United Provinces was a member of the provincial Khilafat Committee and also attended some sessions of the Central Khilafat Committee. In exchange for a monthly retainer of Rs. 150, later increased to Rs. 250 and still later brought down to the original sum, he sent written reports to the government on the secret proceedings of the two Committees. A comparison of these reports with the party's official bulletins on the decisions made in the meetings (now made possible by the opening up of British official papers) proves that the traitor within the camp supplied more correct information to the British authorities than the top leadership did to the party and the press. There must have been

a dozen or more such betrayers in every province and party. Their reports are absolutely invaluable, and are all in English.

Surprisingly enough, a knowledge of the English language is required even for "reading" the vernacular newspapers of the subcontinent. The Government of India's appetite for information was inappeasable, its fingers on the pulse of the country were firm, unmoving and acute, and its anxiety to probe, gauge, sound, read, measure and appraise the Indian mind was keen. To hear the grass of indigenous opinion grow it was necessary to read the native press; but no British administrator, or even his Indian assistant, could master all the Indian vernaculars. For this purpose, therefore, an official machinery was set up, charged with compiling every fortnight a detailed and faithful summary of the contents of all important local newspapers. The profound and positive importance of these reports for the rulers cannot be exaggerated. But their unique value to the historian of today is even greater, because not even one per cent of the newspapers covered by these reports are extant. Hundreds of small newspapers which had short lives but some influence as long as they lasted have completely disappeared, and hardly an issue is to be found in the archives or the libraries or the private collections. Leading dailies have fared only slightly better. Our knowledge about the state of preservation and availability of the major Urdu newspapers is greater than about the existence of Bengali or Hindi or Malayalam or Canada or Telugu dailies. Not a single Urdu newspaper of any consequence is available today in complete file or even in long uninterrupted runs. It is an index to our state of ignorance, and a measure of our misfortune, that we cannot trace the Khilafat movement in the columns of any Urdu daily, or see the Muslim League policies of the 1930s reflected in the press, or to discover the reaction of the Muslim press to the repeal of the partition of Bengal or the electorate issue or the rise of the idea of Pakistan. But, thanks to the imperial information system, we are in a position to find out what these newspapers were printing and in what perspective and from which point of view. The vernacular press reports are in English. The original native word has vanished, and we mourn the loss; the content and the substance have been saved, and for that we must applaud our British rulers' sense of history and appreciation of the value of archives.

Space does not permit further references to the first-hand sources of information left behind by the imperial administration.

Nor can I tarry to enlarge upon their unparalleled amplitude or to submit an inventory of their abundant riches. I think I have made my point: with the single exception of purely literary criticism (literary history is not an exception, because many men of letters and literary movements were inspired by native political or historical forces or Westren examples), there is no aspect of our modern history, however local or trifling, which can be studied without using primary sources whose language is English.

The historian who wants or decides to write in Urdu ought to be made aware of two serious handicaps he faces. One is the absence of adequate source material at his disposal. If he confines his research to what is available in Urdu, in primary or even secondary form, his work is bound to be unsatisfactory because it draws upon grossly insufficient sources of information. Secondly, in case his knowledge of English is good enough to translate from it into Urdu his labour will be doubled. Translation is an extremely difficult and sensitive task if it aims at, as it must, transferring not merely the sense and the substance but, what is the soul and inner significance of any writing, also the nuances, the emphases, the shades of meaning, the subtleties, the play of words, the peculiar idiom, the choice of phrases, and the accent of the original. I will take up later the larger question of whether Urdu has or yet has not reached a level of development where it can be employed to convey complicated concepts and issues involved in historical understanding, constitutional debate, political bargaining, legislative procedure, administrative reform, economic planning and scientific progress.

European Languages

In the context of modern Indian history I would count in English as an Indian language for the following reasons: it was the tongue of the rulers; the country was administered in it and all laws, rules and regulations drafted in it; all the official records maintained in it; all major political parties conducted their official business in it, and leaders and politicians addressed their followers and their rulers in it; all the leading and influential national newspapers were published in it; and all the reports, surveys, correspondence, handbooks, proceedings and other official transactions were written in it. Therefore, I discussed the importance and place of English in our recent past in the preceding section. In the following treatment

of the use and necessity of learning European languages I shall not be referring to English.

Several European languages have a legitimate claim on our attention: some of them because their speakers ruled parts of India; some because their countries traded with the subcontinent; some because they contain contemporary source material relating to our history; and most of them because a great deal of recent historical scholarship of direct concern to us has been published in them.

The French came closest to displacing the British from their Indian possessions, and about half a century of Indian history is a part of the French annals. Even ignoring the tiny French colonies which survived this conflict, the archives in Paris are rich, particularly in French trade with India. The Portuguese attempt to master the subcontinent was slighter and on a smaller scale, but no modern historian should omit all reference to the interlude, and the Lisbon records are another place to visit and consult. Scandinavia, too, entered the lists, though only to aggrandize her commerce. The Danish Trading Company did good business, and the Copenhagen archives are neither completely useless nor irrelevant.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the nations of Europe were interested in India in a different way and on a different level: culture and academic politics. Already in the eighteenth century Germany had been hit by a tide of oriental infatuation, which soon split into two waves: a Persian and Islamic influence which affected Geothe and Heine and some others, and a Hindu impact which proved stronger and gave birth to the strange, ill-defined, and lop-sided field or subject or discipline called Indology. With total indifference to logic, history and common sense, a group of German scholars chose to mark its parameters to enclose those parts of Indian history, philosophy, religion and languages which were related to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism and to exclude everything touching upon Islam. This wilful definition reached the level of absurdity when professors in Berlin, Munich, Halle and Heidelberg wrote tomes on the thought and culture of the Hindus during the centuries of Muslim rule without taking notice of the religion and way of life of the race which allowed this philosophy and customs and manners not only to survive but to flourish.

The spirit lives on, and today in the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg there is a large department of "Indian"

religions and languages, where the only subject of Muslim interest is an elementary and emaciated course in the Urdu language; and there is a department of history which shows a remarkably athletic quality of mind in leaping from the twelfth century to the nineteenth, thus vaulting over 600 odd years of Muslim rule.

German scholarship has produced excellent work on the study of Islam, the Arabic language and Arab civilization, But Muslim India, Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia have never attracted it. The result is unfortunate inasmuch as Indology has spawned a distortion of all university teaching and research concerning the subcontinent.

There is only one theme in which Germany can be said to have some interest for the modern historians. For those with a keen interest in the background of the Khilafat movement the close relationship of Germany with the Ottoman Empire from mid-nineteenth century onwards may be worth exploring. Otherwise, Muslim India, medieval or modern, has not figured in recent German academic debate or in later historical and political scholarship.

France took a greater note of the affairs of Muslim India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Her own colonial presence in north Africa and the Middle East, the Parisian schooling of several Turkish politicians and diplomats, and the French literati's intellectual interest in Islam combined to create a favourable climate in the unversities and academies of the country. During the nineteenth-century European debate on the attitude of Russia towards the Ottoman Empire, and later on the Balkan Wars and the Indian Khilafat movement, a great deal of literature was produced on the subjects. A study of these works, published both as books and as articles in learned journals and also in the leading national dailies, not only gives a new perspective to the developments but enables us to compare the French view of affairs with the British. On Islam as a faith and as a civilization the French wrote with vigour, knowledge, interest, understanding, clarity and, on the whole, sympathy.

The use of the Italian language is only required for one minor topic. To see the other side of the Balkan Wars and the motives and justifications offered by Italy for her invasion of north Africa, which created considerable resentment among the Indian Muslims, the historian of that period would do well to pay attention to the Italian

explanations. This will make his claim to impartiality more acceptable and enlarge his own knowledge of the issues involved in and arising from the conflict. He would also be better equipped to understand what the Muslim press in India and people like Sayyid Ameer Ali and the Aga Khan in London were then publishing.

As far as European research and scholarship on our modern history is concerned, we draw a near blank. By and large, the subcontinent has not aroused much interest. I can suggest three causes of this indifference; there may be others. First, all the primary source material is located in Britain and in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Britain is accessible to a European scholar, but what is available there has to be supplemented with other material which is to be found only in the subcontinent. Distance and cost discourage any research which involves a long journey to an unfamiliar region.

Secondly, the average European historian comes up against the language barrier. Everyone with an interest in India has some knowledge of English, but that is not enough unless he is prepared to confine his investigation to what was said or written by the British officialdom and the English-using Indian politicians and newspapers. The trend in recent historiography is to go to the provincial, local and indigenous roots of politics in order to understand how the mind of the Indian political activist worked. For that kind of inquiry one must have a good knowledge of at least two or three Indian languages, the selection depending on the region or province chosen for the in-depth study. Barring a very few examples, European universities have no facilities for teaching the languages of the subcontinent. About half a dozen academic institutions have such an arrangement, but they are far from satisfactory; and for understandable reasons.

In the first place, there are so many languages required to enable one to use the sources available in them that no university has the financial or professional resources for the task. Nor is it really worth the cost and the labour. The total number of French historians interested in South India may be eight or ten. The richest university in the world cannot for their convenience run a department teaching Tamil, Telugu, Canada, Malayalam, Marhatti and Urdu, with all that it would involve in the way of building up an adequate library and recruiting a large staff, preferably of native speakers of these tongues who have the ability to teach them to foreigners. In the second place, the Indian languages are not written

in the Latin alphabet, which makes them not only unfamiliar but very difficult to learn. Another fact complicates the matter even more. The variety of the scripts, which change from region to region and sometimes within the same region, virtually rules out the chances of gaining proficiency in more than one language.

Thirdly, the ex-imperial powers of Europe have their research and interest priorities pre-determined by their history. The primary concern of each of them lies in its own former colonies. The Dutch write on Southeast Asia, the Belgians on Africa, the Italians on Ethiopia and Tripolitania, the Spanish on Latin America, the Portuguese on Angola, and the French on north Africa and the Middle East. Colonial history is a part of national history. Besides this natural attraction, there are considerations of practical convenience, familiarity extending over a long period, some knowledge of the language, the presence of a large number of former colonial administrators with personal experience, the richness of the archives on the colonial interlude, and the stream of research students flowing in from the colonies to work and earn degrees on the history of the area.

In this parcelling out of the domain of imperial research the Indian colonial period falls into British hands. Other European nations write on the subject from time to time, but it is neither their principal preoccupation nor their forte. In spite of this, over the years, a respectable amount of scholarly work on the continent has accumulated. France leads the way, and next to the English language it is in French that we find the largest number of publications of our interest. Who can ignore Martineau's 4-volume study of Dupleix and his biography of Bussy, or Honataux's standard work on the French colonies, or Deschamps's book on the imperial doctrine. Further, about a dozen learned journals of the highest quality appear from the Netherlands, Germany, France and Italy, some of them multi-lingual, which bring together the latest findings and mature reflections of a large number of scholars working on modern India. The historian will ignore this treasury of current research at his own risk and loss.

It is one of Pakistan's many misfortunes that it has attracted so little attention among the European historians. The irony is the greater in that we have failed to interest even the British scholar in that period of our history which is also a part of his imperial past. There is no excuse for blaming others for this indifference. Willingly

or unwillingly, often with all our wits around us, we have driven away from our doors all seekers of knowledge by denying them easy access and normal courtesy. We have done this in many ways.

First of all, we just don't have adequate material to offer to a foreign scholar. No attempt has been made to search for, locate, acquire, preserve and make available to the public any private papers and other sources of authoritative information. In the second place, our archives are run like government departments set up for the convenience and use of the civil service. A few local scholars might abase themselves and swallow insults in order to gain access to their contents. But a European professor, used to the standards maintained in his country, will abandon his project rather than submit to humiliation.

In the third place, we take every possible step to debar foreign scholars from approaching or utilizing whatever little we have got. Look at the list of hurdles to be crossed by the poor Italian or Dane who has the temerity to choose our history as the field of his research and study. First, he applies to the Pakistan embassy in his country for information on the formalities prescribed for people like him. He is interrogated (the word is used dileberately to describe the nature of the conversation) by a second or third Secretary of the legation who tries to give him the impression that in his (the Secretary's) opinion he (the scholar) wants to go to Pakistan to indulge in subversive activities. (Every Pakistani government employee is trained to look at every Pakistani private citizen and of course every foreigner as an enemy of the State). Finally, he may be allowed to put in an application, giving a full description of his research project and accompanied by a lot of references and confirmations and recommendations from his university. A private scholar is out of the game at this preliminary stage.

The application is then sent to the Foreign Office in Islamabad. Nobody except the Office knows what goes on after that. I presume that the case is referred for comments to the Ministry of Interior (which circulates it to several of its divisions), the government of the province where the scholar wants to work (the Chief Secretary then sends it around to every department which might have the slightest or remotest connection with the visit), the university or universities in which the applicant has shown an interest (the Vice-Chancellor then sends the papers to the faculty concerned, the faculty to the department concerned, the department to the

professor concerned; if there is a research centre at the university in the subject mentioned in the application it must also be consulted), the archives where he wants to work, and some other secret branches of the establishment about which we have no information. Naturally, this exercise in determining the *bona fides* or *mala fides* of the applicant involves much pushing of paper, writing of long notes, searching of conscience and thinking of national security. An important decision has to be taken, and such things cannot be done in a hurry. Moreover, the officials are busy persons with many other weighty matters on their mind.

In about six months all the reports and comments have been assembled in a file running to hundreds of sheets. The Foreign Office staff takes a few more weeks, reading the accumulated words, scrutinizing the various suggestions and pondering over the dimensions and implications of the decision to be reached. At long last, the case is disposed of and a communication is sent to the embassy by the diplomatic bag. (In the good old British days, if the Viceroy's Executive Council would have taken half that time in preparing a dispatch of stately proportions on a crucial issue, the British Indian Empire would have disintegrated in two years, and Lord Curzon would have composed a 100-page epitaph of magnificent prose in one week-end — in an age when communications were in a primitive state and there were no telephones, air services, stenographers, air conditioners or even fast trains).

By the time the Foreign Office's decision is received by the embassy and then conveyed to the waiting scholar, most probably the scholar is no longer waiting. To him time is more precious than it is to the bureaucrats who rule Pakistan. While the clerks in Islamabad and other seats of power have been busy in opening and closing his file, he has chosen another subject for his research to avoid paying a weekly visit to the embassy. Pakistan has lost perhaps a good book on her history, probably a lot of goodwill, and certainly her reputation.

The story continues on its doleful way. The disappointed scholar may, in certain circumstances, decide to go to India where he hopes to find at least some of the material for which he had planned to visit Pakistan. (We must remember that the Indian archives were not divided between India and Pakistan in 1947, and they repose in their entirety in New Delhi). What stories he will tell about Pakistan

to his Indian hosts are not difficult to put together. All this is not imagination. I personally know over ten cases where German, French and Italian scholars were repelled by the delay and subsequently had no good word for the country for which they had entertained, a few months earlier, so much enthusiasm.

The tale is yet not fully told. In a few cases, the waiting scholar has enough patience to wait at the pleasure of the Pakistani bureaucracy. Or, he has already put in a year's work into his book or doctoral thesis and now must visit Pakistan under any dictated conditions rather than see his labour run to waste. Now he applies for a visa, and the officialdom re-opens his case. Permission to consult a few libraries and archives does not mean that he can enter the country at his pleasure. Certainly not. There are rules to be obeyed, formalities to be observed, forms to be completed, guarantees to be furnished, references to be provided, and the healthy state of his finances to be demonstrated to the entire but discretionary satisfaction of the embassy officials. The wretch is in the middle of the game now, and must hold his course. After weeks of running about he hands over to the embassy the pile of papers and documents required for the case to be "processed". Finally a visa is issued, and he is on his way, but with his anticipation and zeal trimmed in proportion to the length of time he had been made to wait.

On his arrival in Pakistan he faces another set of problems and tests. For the first time he sees with his own eyes the bureaucracy of a Third World country at work, and at its worst. He makes many discoveries, all unpleasant. He can't get a decent place to stay. He finds the public transport an ordeal. He is depressed by the archives on which he had pinned so many hopes, and disappointed at the condition and inadequacy of the libraries where he expected at least the major published material to be available. Everywhere he is asked to show his credentials, to fill in forms, to fetch references from his embassy, and to produce his passport and visa. He finds that he needs special permission to visit certain parts of Pakistan. He is surprised by the late opening and early closing of the places where he works, and even more by the dilatory casualness with which the papers he has requisitioned are brought to his desk. But what really drives him to a state of near certifiable insanity comes at the end of his sojourn, when he is told that he cannot post back home the books on Pakistan that he had been buying from the

bookshops during his stay. He needs a non-objection certificate from one Ministry and an export permit from another. He leaves the country with his hackles up.

In contrast to this, I have always found my visits to European countries as full of profit as of pleasure. Without any references or awkward questions, it took me 15 minutes to get a card to use the Bibliotheque Nationale, and 5 minutes less to gain entry into the Cambridge University Library with full rights of use and borrowing. The authorities at the British Museum and Library asked me for my address in London and my background, and, in 10 minutes, issued me a card good for five years. There is no need to tell the reader about the dispatch and personal attention with which requested items were brought up to my desk, inquiries were answered, and books ordered for me from libraries outside the city were procured, and the ease with which I could get in Heidelberg microfilms of rare published material from London and Oxford.

I have given so much space to describing the trials and tribulations of foreign scholars coming to Pakistan to study and write because such treatment is a major cause of the paucity of European scholarship on our history. In a meeting of European historians of South Asia I asked the scholars present why they were ignoring the areas now lying in Pakistan while book after book was coming out on Madras, Bengal, the United Provinces and Assam. The answer was short and bitter and, for me, embarrassing. The efforts of some of them to visit Pakistan for research on Sind and the Punjab had been obstructed by the embassy and the government. A few had managed to arrive, but finding the facilities disheartening had returned with their work uncompleted. Stories of these experiences had gone round, and others had abandoned their projects and chosen other areas.

There is a proverb in the Punjabi language which says: *nan khedange, nan khedan diange* (we will not play the game, but nor will we allow anyone else to play it). The Pakistani historian will not do his work, which is bad enough; he will not let others work in his field, which is worse; he is not conscious of what he is doing, which is worse than the worst.

The conclusion of this discussion is that the historian must know good French, some Italian, and a little German to keep himself abreast of what his European colleagues are writing and reviewing.

It is a pity that our libraries don't acquire books published in European languages; this is a gap which must be filled in, though what has appeared in the last fifty years and sold out is beyond their reach. Even more important is the availability of European journals which carry articles relevant to our work. Every university library and other major libraries must have at least the leading journals like *L'Orient, Orient, Oriente Moderno, Der Islams, Revue des Etudes Islamiques, Revue du Monde Musulman*, and the father of them all, *Journal Asiatique*.

For The Historian Of Islam

There may be some young historian in the country (I don't see any of my generation) who prefers to view Muslim India as an integral part of the Muslim world, or has widened his interest to bring other Muslim countries into his ken, or whose principal interest is the history of the Islamic world, or who plans to work on the cultural and social history of Islam which, of course, will encompass modern Muslim India. For such brave pioneers there is a wider range of languages to cultivate. Their linguistic apparatus has to be far more elaborate than that required by the national historian, because Islam covers a large area of the globe, because its primary sources exist in several languages, and because excellent scholarship has been at work on it in many languages, some outlandish and completely unfamiliar, some merely foreign, a few which we may call "our own".

Ideally, a historian who is honest and aims at doing justice to his subject as well as to his reader, and who wants to cover the whole of the heartland of Islam (whether in its classical age, or in its modern period so as to study the parallel downfall of the three great empires, the Ottoman, the Safavi and the Mughal), will have to be well grounded in the Islamic languages of Arabic, Persian and Turkish, and, if his interest or theme is concerned with the nineteenth-century India, also in Urdu. This is the minimum requirement to be able to read the primary sources of history and contemporary literature and art.

Here the European languages enter the field, not yet for the later scholarship but for the original sources. In the last one hundred and fifty years a vast number of classical texts in history, philosophy, theology, literature and art have been translated or edited (or given both treatments) by British, German, French, Italian and Spanish

scholars. This corpus is indispensable for those who do not know all the three major languages equally well. But it is also serviceable for those who are proficient in the oriental languages, in so far as most of these editions and translations carry long introductions, *cum notis variorun*, annotation, notes and cross references. In a few cases, the original text has been lost and only the translation or the editor's pieced-together text is extant. There are no short cuts to learning amid the bewildering variety and richness of available material. All important Arabic texts have been translated into every European language; the same holds good for the Persian and Turkish sources. What I have said earlier about the necessity and value of going to the original in its own language applies here too. The historian will gain in authority and win our trust if, for example, he can consult at the same time the German, French and Spanish translations or editions of a source. The collation will help him in testing the purity of the text; it will also give him the advantage of sharing the commentary and annotation of three or more different scholars who handled the original source.

The historian will find it difficult to decide which European language to drop (I assume that he knows good English, and will most probably write in it). A great deal of substantial work has been done in all the major languages. In general terms, the Italians have given more attention to history, the Germans to theology and linguistics, and the French to nearly everything.

In this context, Spanish is in a class by itself. Like other European languages it has several classical texts to offer in excellent editing or in fluent but faithful translation. But Spain was a part of Islam — and what a magnificent part — for nearly eight hundred years, and for about half this period the fountain-head of Islamic civilization, not only for Europe but also in many fields for the rest of the Islamic world. Andalusia was the flame which lit up the continent's dark ages. From as far afield as Sweden and Russia came students and teachers to Cordoba and Granada and Seville to pick up what they could of art and literature, music and manners, education and learning, and the ways of civilized living. Spain gave them from its inexhaustible opulence of culture much that later served as the foundation of the European renaissance. Therefore, we don't go to Spain in search of edited texts and learned commentaries, but in pursuit of some of our own roots. In this sense, Spanish is not to be bracketed with German, French and Italian as a

foreign language to be acquired for good scholarship, but with Arabic, Persian and Turkish as one of our own languages.

This does not mean that all contemporary historical material for a study of Islamic Spain is in Spanish (though some is). But several sources are no longer extant or are available only in rare editions and rare manuscripts. In the last one hundred odd years Spanish historians have edited and translated nearly every Arab source, with the added benefits of detailed annotation and analysis. For all historians of classical Islam and the culture of Islam a good knowledge of Spanish is essential. To this they should add a working knowledge of Latin, because several contemporary Western reports about Moorish Spain were written in it, and a high level of proficiency in French, because outside Spain the finest and the most extensive work on her Islamic past has been done in France.

Thus no worthwhile research or wide study in the history of Islam or its cultural and social and economic development is possible without a good knowledge of Arabic, Persian and Turkish, and a working knowledge of some of the major modern European languages, the choice among the latter depending on the historian's specialization. So much for the sake of going to the original sources.

As far as modern European scholarship on Islam is concerned, it must be noticed that in the last 150 years more and better work has been done and published on Islam in Europe in these five languages (English, Spanish, French, Italian and German) than in all the Islamic languages put together. This has been the period of decline in the fortunes of Muslim societies. The loss of political power was accompanied by ignorance, falling educational standards, indifference to study and research, and a lack of interest in the past. Barring Turkey, where much work on the Ottoman centuries has been done, the Islamic world is still in its infancy in the field of historical (and other) scholarship. Its own archives are in a bad shape, its libraries have not been built up, its universities are functioning on the intellectual and academic level of a bad European high school, its scholarly community is not respected by the society and probably does not deserve respect. There are no signs of improvement in these fields, nor are any attempts to mend matters visible. Therefore, for many years to come the historian of Islam shall have to look to Europe for information, advances in knowledge, new publications, learned journals and fresh discoveries and findings

(the universities and private scholars in the United States have not shown the same interest in the field).

This ought to be a compelling incentive to learn these languages. New windows will open in our minds; we will be able to develop new insights into the subject; we will gain a fresh outlook on old issues; and, with the help of new sources and new techniques perfected in the West, we will explore untreaded avenues leading to undiscovered truths, unsuspected verities, and undreamt of interpretations and assessments of what we already know. The value of this acquisition can be judged by comparing the quality of the work of Shaikh Inayatullah, Fazlur Rehman, Aziz Ahmad and Imamuddin, all of whom were conversant with several European languages besides Arabic and Persian, to that of I. H. Qureshi whose linguistic armoury was limited to English and Persian.

In scholarship again Spanish has a special place. In the last thirty years Spanish historians of the Islamic period have been very active, and a large number of new books have appeared, investigating fresh themes, reassessing classical sources, making novel inquiries, and unearthing new facts. For any historian, and especially for a Muslim historian, the most fascinating phenomenon is the debate among the Andalusian scholars in progress since the late 1960s on how much modern Spain owes to her Islamic past. Cogent arguments and learned analyses are being produced by both sides, and the exercise has led to a grand re-valuation of sources and re-interpretation of theories.

The issue, which touches the historical and social conscience of the Andalusian in particular and the Spaniard in general, has come alive, and in the process the annals of Islamic Spain have received unparalleled attention. Even more than the political, it is the cultural and social impact of Islam on the national psyche that is being discussed, assessed and appraised. As the centre of the debate revolves around the Spaniard's search for his roots — in history, in literature, in art, in intellectual attainment, in social customs and ways of thinking, in food and dance and music — and the links that connect these roots to his modern life, his involvement in the debate is personal, sensitive, partisan and at times passionate. Naturally, the discussion has been conducted in Spanish, and the books and learned articles through which it has been carried on have not been translated into any foreign language. This fact alone should incite the historian to learn Spanish. The very nature, role, and significance of

Iberian Islam are being debated. The historian of Islam must not miss this opportunity of hearing the arguments offered by each side.

The Armoury of Languages

So far in this chapter I have been discussing the desirable, not the actual: the linguistict abilities that a historian should possess, not what he does possess. Now is the time to examine the state of his knowledge of languages against the background of the requirements demanded by his profession. Let me take the foreign languages first.

The one sign of assured disaster which has been consistently present on the educational horizon since 1947 is the falling standard in the comprehension and use of the English language. The regression took a serious turn in the 1960s with the decision to create an Urdu and an English stream in colleges and universities in the teaching and the examining of all non-science subjects. Soon all colleges, except the most prestigious in Lahore and Karachi, opted for Urdu on the undergraduate level; and most of the post-graduate university lecturing also came to be done in Urdu. At present, as a natural development, research students are allowed to write, and many do write, their theses in Urdu. The wisdom of this policy and its consequences for historical writing will be discussed in the following section. Here only the fact should be noted, and its implications.

In the last ten years the knowledge of English in the colleges and universities has sunk to a level where the majority of the advanced students can no longer follow with comprehension a lecture delivered in English and a book written in non-Pakistani English. The new generation of lecturers, produced by this system and appointed to perpetuate it, is unable to understand a complicated constitutional argument, or a dispatch addressed to the Secretary of State for India, or a document drafted by the Government of India. In a few years' time, when the older generation, many of whom were trained in Britain and the United States, retires the university teacher will find it difficult, if not impossible, to consult the sources in English and, since the great bulk of the original material is in English, to write anything in the field of history. Nor will he be able to guide his students' reading or to refer them to the relevant publications. Further, he himself will find his English so weak that no foreign university would admit him to work for any degree. His students would not understand even the

drift of a British professor's lecture. Thus the system has provided a guarantee that, in the coming years, historical writing would be limited to a few books in Urdu plagiarised from other Urdu books. There may be some exceptions here and there, but then there are always exceptions. In twenty years we will have no history to read, teach or write. That is why I began this mention of the decline of English with the word "disaster".

It is a rare modern historian who knows some Arabic, his profession of Islam notwithstanding, though in some fields his essential sources are in that language. Original material in Arabic is relevant to any study of the Islamic *madrasa* system of education and to all research bearing on the cultural, religious and intellectual evolution of Muslim India. Only a few of these sources are available in Urdu translation. The great bulk is a closed book to our historian.

Recently Arabic has been made a compulsory subject of study and examination up to the tenth class. Results of this innovation will appear in 10-20 years, depending on how many students continue with Arabic beyond the school level, on the standard of teaching, and on the number of historians who studied it up to a stage where they gained a working knowledge of the language.

Arabic is, of course, not indispensable to the political, constitutional and economic historian, and even the cultural historian may manage with the available Urdu and English translations and borrowings from standard historical studies. But for the historian of Islam in India there is no escape from mastering the language. It is not an easy language to learn, but its knowledge holds the key to many doors.

The busy or careless or lazy historian may neglect his Arabic, but he has no excuse at all for failing to gain a high level of proficiency in Persian. In fact, every Pakistani with any sustainable claim to culture ought to have a thorough grasp of the language.

Persian is so much a part of us that our recent abandonment of it is an astonishing act of self-abnegation. For six centuries it remained the language of government, ruling dynasties, literature, intellectual intercourse and the general culture of Muslim India. It enriched the vocabulary of all Muslim languages of the subcontinent. Even Hindi and some south Indian non-Aryan tongues did not escape its influece. Generations of Hindus, most of them of the higher castes and the official elite, mastered it and used it in their

everyday life. It was the court language of the Sikh Kingdom of the Punjab. The Muslim gentleman of the nineteenth century was steeped in Persian, and when in later years he reluctantly learnt English he kept his Persian very much alive. In the succeeding century and up to independence it was a necessary and imprescriptible equipment of every educated Muslim (and, in northern India, of many Hindus). Even those who had not been able to complete their schooling knew by heart large chunks of Sa'di and Hafiz. Half-educated matrons could recite passages from Firdausi. Till about the 1920s many families corresponded in Persian. Till today, most items of our food and clothing are known by their Persian names. Persian is the national language of one of our most important nieghbours, Iran, and one of the two languages of another next-door country, Afghanistan. It is still used in Central Asia with which we have had so many links for four centuries.

All the sources of our medieval history and many of the modern are in Persian. Very little of even the latter has been translated into Urdu or English. Next to English, it is Persian without which the historian cannot practise his profession.

Persian enjoys the singular distinction of being an essential part of our literature. Urdu is a child of Persian in more senses than one. It has borrowed its prosody, metres, scansion, poetical *genres*, style, imagery, backgroud, tastes, and contents and shades of meaning from Persian. Only its grammar is indigenous to India, and a small portion of its vocabulary. Most Urdu words are wholesale transfers from Persian or amended forms of it. The Arabic vocabulary of Urdu came *via* Persian, which explains its altered meanings. Much of Urdu poetry (as some prose) is made up of Persian phrases and stock formations with an odd Hindi verb-ending and preposition thrown in to complete the sense. Many Urdu poets have also written poetry in Persian. The two supreme examples of Ghalib and Iqbal prove that Persian is not at all a foreign language. It is not uncommon to come across a Persian verse or two in the middle of an Urdu *ghazal*.

In the light of this historical and cultural background it seems incredible that with the creation of Pakistan should have begun the erosin of Persian from our educational system and daily life. It was reduced to the lowly condition of being one of several optional subjects, which only a few took up for study because it had no "career" value. Today, educated Pakistanis in their forties are

unfamiliar with it, and in their company when I quote a Persian couplet they demand a translation of it. We have stuck a foreign label on one of our own languages and turned our back upon it.

The result is a havoc for every kind of historian. The political historian cannot read the original sources; he therefore looks around for a translation or does not consult the primary sources. In the universities, there is no tradition of prescribing selections from original sources as obligatory reading; naturally, because the professor himself cannot read Abul Fazl or Badayuni or Shah Waliullah. The social and cultural historian is sealed off from his primary texts; for him they might well exist in Russian or Chinese. Even the intellectual and literary historian is unable to approach his basic material. It is outrageous, but a known fact, that many lecturers in Urdu literature and authors of critical works teach and write without even a nodding acquaintance with Persian. Can a professor of Urdu explain the origin and derivation of an Urdu word without knowing Persian? Can a literay critic discuss Iqbal when he cannot read his Persian works? Things have come to a pass where the educated Pakistani elite cannot read the nation's greatest poet, the scholar cannot read anything published in Iran and Afghanistan, the large bookshops don't stock Persian books, and the historian cannot even list the titles of his primary sources of information.

The cruelty perpetrated on the Persian language, however scandalous and incomprehensible it may be, pales into insignificance before the treatment we have meted out to our native tongues. We have not only bartered away our cultural heritage to foreigners for a mess of pottage, but surrendered our birthright in favour of Urdu in exchange for nothing. And in the bargain we have also said goodbye to our self-respect, because we don't know what we have lost.

In its written form, Baluchi is a very new language. But it is an old oral language whose epic poetry has been on the tongue of the Baluchis for several centuries. With the current neglect of provincial languages and their receding importance in the schooling system, it will not be long before the tradition of memorizing the classics dies out, and with it the only source of the history of that region.

Sindhi is comparatively rich in written records, in Sufi poetry and in modern press. But I am not well informed about how much of this literature has been or is being preserved, and the extent to which

it is being used by the historians of the province. The same holds good for Pashto.

The Punjabi language has been the worst sufferer — and at the hands of its own speakers. The Muslim elite, of the Punjab accepted Urdu in the second half of the nineteenth century completely and unreservedly, betraying without a grimace the 1,000-year old Persian and God knows how many years' old Punjabi.

What irresistible force impelled this unrepresentative leadership to this doom? There was no such force; merely a political rivalry, a cultural inferiority complex and a lack of vision.

With the British annexation of the Punjab, Persian, the court language of the dethroned Sikhs, had to go. English occupied the vacated upper reaches. We don't know who decided that the language of schooling and lower judiciary should be Urdu. Several Urdu-speaking "experts" from Delhi, Agra and Oudh arrived in Lahore to organize the educational system, write textbooks and propagate Urdu. The local leadership did not protest. Why? Partly because of the religious and political conflict with the Sikh and the Hindu communities of the province. The Sikh rule had not been kind to the Muslims. Now the Sikhs reverted to Gurmakhi, the language of their scripture, which was very close to Muslim Punjabi but was written in a non-Persian script. The Hindus wrote Hindi in the Nagari script. As a written language Punjabi had been in abeyance since long. The Muslim elite in search of a language and keen to assert its separate identity, collaborated with the imported advisers in erecting an Urdu-governed educational and cultural structure for the province. Twenty years later, with the Aligarh movement in the ascendant, the Punjab elite was the first non-U.P. group to swear its fealty at Sayyid Ahmad Khan's hand. It also suffered, or was made to suffer, from a feeling of inferiority *vis a vis* the new spokesmen of the Mughal inheritance. Without scrutinizing the credentials and claims of the new inheritors or realizing the decadence of their culture, it decided to wear borrowed plumes.

With the spread of education in the Punjab came the percolation of Urdu into the lower strata of society. Punjabi was not even considered fit to receive the consolation prize of being made an optional subject of study in the schools. Its proper place was oblivion. For three quarters of a century (*c*. 1870-1947) the educated

Punjabi Muslim was trained to hold English in high respect, to offer the rest of his loyalty to Urdu, and to learn some Persian.

Still, the British Punjabi Muslim showed a saving grace. He retained Punjabi in his home and in his social life. The family spoke Punjabi in and outside its home, loved to listen to the recitations of Punjabi classical epics and folk songs, joked in Punjabi, and abused in Punjabi. But the Punjabi forgot how to read his mother tongue, and completely refused to write in it. If he was a high civil servant, he did a wonderous thing: he spoke to the servants in Urdu! No insult was meant. He was merely aping his British colleagues.

The Pakistani Muslim Punjabi has created a new world around himself — contradictory, artificial, brittle, counterfeit. He still speaks Punjabi at home with his wife and amid friends, but not to his children. In the office he speaks Urdu. Called upon to make a public speech, political or merely social, he uses Urdu. Even fewer Punjabis can now read Punjabi, or follow a singer of classical poetry (though they listen with rapt attention in feigned interest). As Urdu-medium schools have penetrated the rural areas, a cultural transformation has overtaken the society. For the first time in the two thousand years' history of the Punjab, the number of native speakers is decreasing. The tragic accompaniment of this metamorphosis is that the new generation in the villages is losing interest in the epic poetry and folk songs of its own soil. The radio and the television have reached the rustic homestead to hasten, complete and assure this loss of memory and of native pride.

If the Punjabis persist in this folly of stupendous proportions and horrifying consequences, in fifty years their mother tongue would be counted as a dead language — more dead than Latin and Sanskrit, which are still read by classical scholars, spoken by a few priests and *pandits*, and used in Christian and Hindu religious services. May God bless the soul of the deceased!

Then there is the matter of the status of one provincial language in the other provinces, both in the estimation of the government (universities) and of the people. In this connection, a long list of questions clamours for answers. Is Sindhi taught in the Punjabi schools and colleges, and Pashto in the Sindhi ones, and Punjabi in the Pathan ones, and so on? And, why not? If some colleges of Lahore can make arrangements for teaching French, why can't they offer similar facilities for the country's own languages? Do

the university libraries of one province have sections on the books published in the languages of the other provinces? Do the universities of one province run departments of the languages of the other provinces, or even one department teaching all of them? Are there any facilities outside the universities to learn these languages? If France and Germany can take the trouble of opening more than one centre for teaching French and German to Pakistanis, why can't the provincial governments take the same steps in relation to each other? How many Punjabis can read Sindhi and Pashto, and Pathans Punjabi and Sindhi, and Sindhis Pashto and Punjabi? A few inquiries among institutions and persons will provide the answers to these questions, and I fear they will be in the negative on all points.

Even if the historical material available in these languages were slight in size or importance, that could not be pleaded as an excuse for ignoring them. But the fact is that there is enough material in each of them to warrant the effort involved in learning them.

Take Pashto. There is Khushhal Khan Khattak in literature, the folk songs in culture, the records and publications relating to the Khudai Khidmatgar movement and the newspapers and magazines of a large variety in politics, and so on. In Sindhi we have the great poetic tradition from Shah Abdul Latif to Shaikh Ayaz in literature, the provincial press, and the records of politics from annexation to independence. In Punjabi, there is the glorious Sufi poetry which mirrors the life and manners of the common man as well as his discontent with his lot and his protest against the *zamindar* and the *pir*, the several hundred books and pamphlets published between 1860 and 1900 on theology and social problems, modern *qissas* and *wars*, folk songs, and some material on the Khilafat agitation and the Khaksar movement.

In evaluating the historical worth and relevance of this material we must recall to mind several things. It was written or composed in the mother tongue of the people, thus giving popular expression to their genuine feelings — which imparts to it a primacy which English and Urdu sources cannot possess. It conveys the ethos of a society at a certain point of time with the effect and strength not found in contemporary chronicles. It speaks from the heart and in the local idiom, thus bestowing on it an immediacy and intimacy for which we look in vain in officially inspired accounts. Taken as a

whole, it is the most impeccably documented and the most honest raw material of history.

The historian will do well to cultivate his own back garden and pluck its homely fruit before hopping over to the neighbouring patch in search of his own roots. It is better to see one's self in one's own mirror than asking others: who am I?

Without entering into the controversy whether Urdu is or can be or should be the national language of the country, we must try to find the level of proficiency it commands among the students, teachers and scholars of history. All reports from the profession agree that the change-over from English to Urdu in undergraduate and graduate teaching has not increased the ability of any group in the use of the language. One major reason quoted for abandoning English was that the student found it difficult to express himself in it, and therefore had to spend so much time on improving his acquaintance with it that he could not give adequate attention to other subjects. In other words, he was forced to neglect the contents of his education in favour of its medium. There is truth in this argument to the extent that English is a difficult language to learn and very difficult to master, that its teaching was defective because it was in the hands of the natives whose own grasp of the language was weak, and that the imported textbooks were written in standard, not Pakistani, English.

But when the students were allowed to read and express themselves in Urdu, there was no improvement in the quality of their oral expression or written composition. What caused this failure of an experiment heralded in with hopes and plaudits? Two sets of factors stood between intention and fulfilment: one political, one academic.

Politically, the whole question of the medium of instruction has been treated with the maximum irresponsibility that could be mustered. Both in discussion and decision, the academic essentials and educational aims were not considered. A see-saw policy was followed with a total lack of consistency, for no ostensible reason except that every government wanted to be seen to give a new policy to the country. Bureaucrats and educationalists dithered because they had not done their home work. Each new policy, irrespective of its merits, has come up against the opposition of three of the four provinces. Except the Punjab, every province has insisted, with

complete justification but with varying success, on imparting primary education in the student's mother tongue.

The most serious political controversy has arisen from the territorial origins of Urdu and the domination of its users in the official establishment. The average citizen considered the Urdu language as a tongue belonging to a foreign region (now a part of India) and spoken and used as a birthright by a tiny portion of the total population of the country. In his opinion, it is neither logical nor democratic nor moral to make such a language the national language; at best, it could be given the legal status of a link and official language (like Hindi in India). This feeling against Urdu has been exacerbated by the Punjab's decision to stand in its defence. Whatever the reasons for this attitude, its consequences have been ominous. The three smaller provinces have come to associate with the Punjab not only political dominance, bureaucratic power and military rule (because the army, which has overthrown three governments and supplied the ruling General, is predominantly Punjabi), but also lingual dictatorship. The irony of the matter is that even in the Punjab the students and the teachers have not taken to Urdu for any genuine historical, sentimental or national reasons, but simply on grounds of supposed convenience and expediency. They fondly believed that Urdu was easier to master, simply because it was a "local" language and therefore more familiar to them. They forgot that no language comes easy except the mother tongue, and Urdu was not the native language of any Punjabi. Thus political propaganda, official vacillation, educational indifference and emotional upsurge combined to create in the mind of the student and the teacher a confusion which vitiated all efforts at acquring a good knowledge of Urdu.

The academic weaknesses of Urdu were no less serious, though no one paid any attention to them. In the first place, no attempt was made to teach Urdu in the background of the languages from which it had emerged. In England and France nobody is allowed to take a degree in English or French language without a workable knowledge of Latin (sometimes also Greek). In the British universities papers on Anglo-Saxon and Olde English are obligatory on the undergraduate level. In Pakistan, one can rise to be a professor of Urdu without knowing any Persian, Arabic and Prakrit. When the teacher's own foundations are built on sand, the knowledge of his students is bound to be feeble. The best student

does not feel at home in Urdu, as he should, or as the average German student does in his own language.

In the second place, all the talk of a "national" language notwithstanding, and in spite of years of teaching and lecturing in Urdu, there are still only a handful of people who can convey the contents of any discipline with fluency and ease without mixing a good deal of English with their Urdu. In the social sciences, for example, I have never met a lecturer who can communicate or explain elementary political or economic theory or practice in pure Urdu.

The reason for this inability lies not only in the general habit, perfected in the last one hundred years, of speaking in Urdu-English (a refined new language, which is neither Uudu nor English) or Punjabi-English (the Pathan and the Sindhi rarely mix their language with English), but also in the poverty of Urdu. Whatever may be the claims of the defenders of Urdu and the self-proclaimed achievements of the Urdu Development Boards and Authorities, the fact remains that the vocabulary of Urdu is too limited to allow it to express or expound most of the contents of modern knowledge. Let anyone try to lecture on Soviet Communism or the French Revolution or the working of the House of Commons or the international balance of trade or military dictatorship in the Third World in Urdu, and he will soon find out how quickly he is at the end of his tether.

Given a weak grounding, the teachers fumbling for turns of expression, and the language in search of words and phrases, it is but natural that there should be no textbooks worth looking at. Original thinking is, of course, impossible in an undeveloped language. But even a good textbook demands a power of expression so that difficult and abstruse concepts may be explained in clear and easily understood words, and a wealth of synonyms and parallels to indicate nuances, shades of meaning and emphases. As long as Urdu lacks these facilities, we should not expect any textbooks which can be used as efficient and reliable channels of knowledge or information. Some years ago there appeared a book in Urdu on comparative government for the students reading political science for the master's degree. It was not only a work of plagiarism, but was totally incomprehensible until one read it, almost paragraph by paragraph, in collation with the original American publication. Even then, it was difficult to *understand* the meaning of the text because

the translation of the terms was literal, outlandish and highly Arabicized or Persianized. Still, students have been using the book, passing the examinations, and even getting a good class. An excellent illustration of the impact of textbook on the standards of education.

Thus we see that a combination of circumstances — accidents and ironies of history, quirks and misfortunes of politics, absence of concensus on the language issue, neglect of mother tongues and provincial languages, inability to master any medium of expression, unwillingness to try to learn European languages, failure to keep Persian alive, insistence on speaking and wrting a Pakistani version of English which can neither be understood nor recognized by the Englishman, and a general indifference to how one expresses oneself — has weakened and impoverished the historian's armoury of languages. Several languages that he ought to be able to read he can read only imperfectly or not at all. There are so many doors which he has shut upon himself, without realizing that he is denying himself the knowledge and use of much that is indispensable to his profession.

The Working Language

Barring a few exceptions — unlikely even as exceptions — of Pathan and Sindhi historians who might prefer to write in Pashto or Sindhi, the Pakistani historian's choice of his working language must lie between English and Urdu. In nearly all cases the decision will be made, not by the person himself, but by his background, education, and proficiency in the language. I don't know any historian who can write equally well in English and Urdu, or has even made an effort. Both I. H. Qureshi and Aziz Ahmad had Urdu as their mother tongue; Qureshi had as a young man published a few dramas and short stories in Urdu; Aziz Ahmad was a highly respected Urdu novelist, short story writer and literary critic. But when it came to historical scholarship, both turned to English.

Though, as I say, there is only a slight element of choice in the decision, it may be interesting to explore, even as a theoretical exercise, the possible advantages and disadvantages of writing in this language or that. Such a consideration will not, in all probability, influence any historian to change languages, but he may get a better view of the vantage-ground he wishes to occupy through his work.

Let us take English first. Writing in English stands us in good stead in several ways, though the language may be a gift of the "hated" imperial ruler. The overwhelming part of the source material for modern history exists in English, and this facility saves us from the difficult and tedious task of translation. It also solves the problem of deciding whether long quotations from the primary sources are to be given with or without translations. A book written in English has a wider readership among the local elite; though, by contrast, it circulates less on the popular level. If one is writing in English, it is easier to consult, draw upon, refer to and quote from the vast scholarship already available in that language. It is also possible to get the book published in the West, in which case it receives not only a better get-up through superior printing and binding but greater notice from readers, librarians and reviewers. Even if published locally, it may command international readership and academic attention, thus making the author a part of the international community of historians (depending on its scholarly worth, of course). As Urdu is not understood even in other Muslim countries, an English book has some chance of being read by the Iranians, the Arabs, the Turks, the Bangladeshis, the Indonesians and the African Muslims. It also has a large market and wide professional readership in India which shares our history if not our approach. Within the country, it may be translated into Urdu if there is a demand from the vernacular reading public or the Urdu-using scholars. A few Pakistani historical works have been transferred from English into Urdu (like I. H. Qureshi's *The Struggle for Pakistan*), but I have not seen any English translations from the corpus of Urdu historical scholarship.

English enjoys one supreme advantage over Urdu which might prove a decisive factor for those enjoying an equal command of the two languages. This lies in the universally recognized and practised research technique. There is a standard *apparatus criticus* in use in English and all other European languages, with only the slightest variations to match personal preference, habit or idiosyncracy. Urdu has nothing of the kind (of this more below).

Finally, English can be enlisted in a national cause. Even those who dislike it as an undesirable legacy of a humiliating past will concede that it gives us a medium to reach the outside world of scholarship and general readership. This world is predominantly English-reading: British Commonwealth, United States, whole of

Africa minus the north, part of Southeast Asia, Philipines, and several other areas; in Europe, almost all historians of South Asia read English. We know very well that so far the writing of the history of Muslim India has been a preserve of the Indians and the British. In the last forty years, due to our inactivity, the world has come to see our history through the eyes of foreigners, most of whom are not sympathetic to our point of view. The danger is imminent that in a few more years what they have written would come to be accepted by the whole world as the standard history. This consummation will be entirely our own fault.

If this trend has to be stopped and reversed, the Pakistani historian has to be up and doing. Nobody reads Urdu outside Pakistan and a few cities in India. To tell the world our own side of the story we must speak in the language it understands, and that is English. Optimism, wishful thinking and official propaganda are misleading the Pakistanis into thinking that since departments of Urdu exist at certain European and American universities, what we write in Urdu is accessible to the outside scholar and student. That is not true.

I have visited many of these places. The Urdu taught there is of an elementary variety and does not equip the student with enough knowledge even to read (with some help) a primary source. I have not met a single European or American historian who, while talking to me about our history, has spoken a word of Urdu or referred to any Urdu writing or even pronounced correctly Muslim proper names. Today power, prestige, influence and knowledge belong to the West. If we want it to know and understand us, we must address it in its own language. History is the key to such knowledge and understanding. Let us provide the West with an opportunity of getting acquainted with our past. If we do this, it might still be possible to correct the current European and American view of our history which is India-oriented and India-centred. The Indians too love their own languages, but the historians among them have chosen to work in the English language. Now, after the labours of one generation, they are reaping the harvest of a wise decision. Today South Asian history is, everywhere in the world, what the Indian historians say it is. The European and American scholars cannot but acquiesce in this monopoly; there is no competitor in sight.

There are, however, two disadvantages in adopting English as the working language. The common reader whose interest is confined to popular history is unwilling to read an English book. Therefore, the historian writing in English does not reach this readership. A parallel development has deprived our student of the ability to read English. This cuts the links between the historian writing in English and the largest and the most inquisitive educated group in the making. This is a serious loss, indeed; and the only remedy I can suggest is an arrangement by which all serious and valuable works of historical scholarship are translated, well and faithfully, into Urdu. In default of this, the English-writing historians will be reduced to a small coterie of readers of one another's books, while the mass of the reading public will not be aware of their existence.

The historian who chooses to write in Urdu will profit by the wind that has been blowing for some time in his favour. He will have a large reading public, both on the academic and popular levels ("large" here is a relative term; in a society with an incredibly low literacy rate, the number of people able and willing to buy and/or read even a book on popular history is to be counted in hundreds, not thousands). Likewise, he will enjoy the loyalty of the new student class which has given up English or lost proficiency in it. These are solid advantages in terms of readership, but they must be weighed against the fact that both these groups, the popular readers and the young students, make for raw audience, with a weak background of information and no critical sense. Judged by the quality of its readership, the Urdu work occupies a very weak position.

There are two other inter-connected advantages in attempting a piece of research in Urdu. Where the original source material is mainly in the Urdu language, or in Persian, the historian will be saved the enormous and thankless labour of translating long passages from it into another (and foreign) language. This will facilitate his work to a considerable extent. Urdu will also prove useful if he is writing on cultural, intellectual, religious and literary aspects of history, both because most of his primary sources are bound to be in Urdu and some other vernacular language, and because the themes to be treated lend themselves to better handling in the local tongue (though Ahmad Shah Bukhari, Muhammad Sadiq, Aziz Ahmad and Hamid Ahmad Khan chose to write in

English on literature, art and religion, and did full justice to the subjects).

The capacity of Urdu to serve as a scholarly and satisfactory medium of historical writing suffers from many handicaps. First, the amount of source material available in Urdu is small, which necessitates a great deal of translation. Secondly, when writing in Urdu, it is difficult to use and quote extensively from the work done in English. Thirdly, the historian has to be content with a limited readership. In Pakistan he will be rarely read by the elite; outside the country he will not be read at all, not even in the Islamic world. Fourthly, he will be cut off from the international community of historians: unable to attend conferences and communicate with people working in his field in Europe, the United States and Africa.

Fifthly, his books cannot be reviewed abroad; in fact, not even in Pakistan, because there is no tradition of scholarly and balanced reviews in Urdu. Sixthly, there is little chance that his work will be translated into English and absolutely none that it will be transferred into other Western languages. Seventhly, because he is writing in a language with a short reach, he cannot influence foreign historians. Finally, even in Pakistan his impact is blunted by the fact that the decision-making classes still do not take Urdu scholarship seriously. The economic planners, the members of the various committees and commissions of inquiry, the senior civil servants, the military rulers, and the judges of the superior courts do not read, refer to, cite, or depend upon Urdu works, because what they need is not available there.

But I have not yet touched upon the most impairing drawbacks of Urdu as a medium of historical research, which constitute a separate category of their own and leave a trail of inadequacies and failures. Because of their far-reaching consequences they demand our critical attention.

In the first place, there are the technical problems involved in using and quoting English sources. It is not generally realized that in order to be able to execute a competent translation one requires a good command of *both* the languages. It is impossible to transfer the shades of meaning of a well-written piece of prose, or the recondite points of a philosophic discussion, or the subtleties of the arguments of a constitutional debate, or the finer legal aspects of a political compromise, without knowing the language of the original as

intimately as that in which one is writing. How many Urdu historians and political scientists can demonstrate such a command of the English language? Assuming that there are a few such people amongst us, they still face the difficulty, inherent in all translation, that the transferred word rarely carries the exact sense and the precise emphasis of the original. As every historian knows, his analysis and interpretation often depend on the significance, contours and layers of meaning of the word or phrase used in a chronicle, report, version, statement, speech or letter. How is he going to give his reader the exact feel and temper of the original phrase?

The necessity of furnishing quotations from a foreign source confronts the historian with a dilemma. Should he translate the English passage as faithfully as he can and give the reader only the Urdu version, or should he also put in the footnote or in parentheses in the text the original matter, or should he quote directly the original English and offer a translation in the footnote? Such cases do not present an insuperable problem to the European historians, nor, in most cases, to their readers. A working knowledge of two or three languages is common among the scholars. Undergraduates reading history must learn one or two foreign languages (the minimum requirement is an ability to read). Therefore, the historian is not obliged to translate his quotations from the foreign primary sources. The citing of the original in its own language also does not create any printing problem, as all Western European languages have the same script. A page in an English book containing, say, a French and a German quotation will still display a pleasing uniformity of type. The Urdu historian is less fortunate.

The historian would have been relieved of at least a part of his burden had the English sources in common use been available in standard Urdu translation. This would have meant a great saving of time and energy, and at the same time a shuffling off of the responsibility for the quality of the translation upon the standard works prepared by others. But even this path of escape or convenience is blocked. Even a beginning has not been made in the direction of providing Urdu translations of the most important, basic and widely used primary sources. A random selection of such desiderata would include Sayyid Ameer Ali's articles, the Aga Khan's writings, Muhammad Ali's speeches, All India Muslim League's annual addresses and resolutions, proceedings of the

Round Table Conference, and Jinnah's speeches. Then there are the official sources, without which no history can be written, which await translation, like legislative proceedings, gazetteers, annual moral and material progress reports, census reports, etc.

Further, we have hundreds of thousands of letters written in English by all the ranking leaders from the Aga Khan to Jinnah which possess the weight and value of historical documents. I have not seen any translated collection of correspondence which the Urdu historian can use. It must be admitted that it is *impossible* to transfer into Urdu even a selection of the extant official sources in English: such an undertaking would be tantamount to translating the entire contents of the India Office Records collection, a goodly portion of the British Public Records Office, and the private papers in the possession of several British museums and universities. The equally important non-official material requiring a similar effort would be the inexhaustible world of British and Indian newspapers and journals, the archives of the Indian National Congress and a host of other primary sources. No matter how hard he tries, the Urdu historian shall always find himself at a disadvantage in comparison with one who is able and willing to write in English.

In the second place, Urdu vocabulary is not rich enough and its sentence-structure not supple enough to carry the weight of sophisticated prose. The roots of this defect lie in the poverty of classical prose and the failure of the language to develop its style in keeping with the requirements of changing circumstances.

From the beginning Urdu has concentrated on one verse form, the *ghazal*. The happy result has been a rich mass of poetry which it is a pleasure to read, sing and listen to. The difficulty about the *ghazal*, in Urdu as well as in Persian, is the severely limited vocabulary in which the stereotyped ideas and conceits are dressed up. From Wali to Faiz we can observe the evolution of a few hundred stock words, formations and phrases, all rooted in Persian, meant to express the traditional feelings and sentiments of love. Some of these compositions and creations are magnificent in their beauty and roll on the tongue with stately grace. But the vocabulary is not only cramped to the extent where it soon begins to pall on a sensitive mind or ear, but is also trained to convey a very exiguous range of emotions and states of mind. It lacks descriptive power and expressive strength. One can compose a moving *ghazal* and *nazm* in it, but cannot expound a philosophic point or describe a

constitutional problem. Further, Urdu is empty of technical vocabulary in law and the social sciences. Add to this defect of word poverty the inability of the sentence to carry several complicated clauses without breaking down into meaningless chaos, and we have a prose which is not qualified to express a sophisticated argument or an intricate analysis or a fluent narration.

In the third place, Urdu style has not kept pace with the times: another heritage of its Perso-Arabic past. The classical and not-so-classical ways of expressing oneself have persisted, with all their oddities, mannerisms, modes and idiosyncracies intact. The modern reader, used to the English method of saying things, finds them bizarre and uncouth. Some examples of this follow.

First, the historical personages and figures are mentioned with their full honorifics in place. It is considered disrespectful to call them simply by their names. Thus we have Mawlana Muhammad Ali, Allama Iqbal, Mawlana Abul Kalam Azad, Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan, Allama Sulaiman Nadawi, Mawlana Maududi, Mawlawi Zakaullah, Mawlawi A. K. Fazlul Huq, Allama Mashriqi, and so on. An advanced stage of this demonstration of esteem necessitates the bestowal of titles, and then the person so honoured is often referred to as a title and not as an individual. Mahmud Hasan is Shaikh-ul-Hind, Ataullah Shah Bukhari becomes Amir-i-Shariat, Abul Kalam Azad is called Lissan-ul-Hind or Imam-ul-Hind, Iqbal is known as Sha'ir-i-Mashriq, Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung is remembered as Khatib-ul-Hind, Hafeez Jullundheri is recalled as Sha'ir-i-Islam, Jinnah must be addressed as Quaid-i-Azam (sometimes I wonder how Sayyid Ahmad Khan managed to escape the ennoblement!).

There is nothing wrong with this sentiment of showing one's respect to a leader or a man of learning. If a writer insists on calling an historical figure by a self-invented title, it is his business.

But soon the trouble starts. Some persons are thus glorified, and some are not. It is not easy to find reasons for the discrimination. If learning was the yardstick, why was Sayyid Ameer Ali ignored? If political status and power were the test, how did Mian Fazl-i-Husain fail it? Was the possession of a beard the only qualification prescribed for earning the title of Mawlana? If so, why was Sayyid Ahmad Khan spared? If a beard was considered a hallmark of a true and great Muslim, why were Iqbal and Abdullah Yusuf Ali called Allama? If a Mawlawi is a man of God and religion,

as he is in common parlance, how did A. K. Fazlul Huq and Nawab Muhsin-ul-Mulk make the grade? In the estimation of the Pakistani "nationalist" historian only those deserve respect who were loyal to the Muslim League and the Pakistan movement. By that token, Abul Kalam Azad and Abul Ala Maududi should never have been called Mawlana.

Such contradictions and illogicalities abound in this field of popular "dignification". But sometimes the insistence on calling a hero by his title results in an absurdity. In the late 1930s (the exact year is a matter of controversy) Jinnah was for the first time called Quaid-i-Azam (Great Leader) in a public meeting. The word caught on and was popularized by the Muslim press. After independence, the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, through a resolution of the house, bestowed this title upon him. Since then, he is always referred to as the Quaid-i-Azam in official papers, textbooks and most works of history. Often, in speech and writing, he is called Quaid-i-Azam and nothing else. Over the years the title has come to have an existence of its own, and his real name, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, does not always follow it. For nearly twenty years every television viewer has been seeing, several times every day, a slide carrying a short quotation from his speeches with the title "*Quaid-i-Azam ne farmaya*" (Quaid-i-Azam said). A widely-circulated Urdu daily, *Nawa-i-Waqt*, publishes in every issue a quotation from Jinnah under the heading "*Quaid-i-Azam ne farmaya*" and a verse from Iqbal under the heading "*Allama Iqbal ne farmaya*". Many textbooks and popular histories have made it a practice to mention him as Quaid-i-Azam, without giving his name. In our teaching system all knowledge is summarized into what the student sees and hears (curiosity and understanding play no part in the process); in his textbooks, in the classroom, from his teacher, in the newspapers, on the television screen, from the radio — everywhere he comes across the word Quaid-i-Azam. I know it from personal inquiries that at least a quarter of the school students do not know Jinnah's name, and believe that his parents christened him Quaid-i-Azam. The formality has overwhelmed the reality. Not content with this result, the government elevated the formality to the level of absurdity when it changed the name of the University of Islamabad to the Quaid-i-Azam University. It is as if India had a "Mahatma University" or England a "Her Majesty's University", or Germany a "Fuhrer Universitat".

In history writing this oriental habit of referring to people by their honorifics and self-awarded or informal titles can be a source of confusion to the reader (much more so to the Western foreigner). Sometimes the respectful author is so carried away by his enthusiasm that he muddles his Mawlawis, juggles his Mawlanas, mingles his Allamas and mixes his Hazrats, to the annoyance of the reader and the perversion of the truth.

This show of respect to the heroes of history dots the printed page with a long procession of Mawlawis, Mawlanas, Allamas and Amirs, which takes up a lot of space, consumes ink and paper, pads the book, and puts up the cost of the publication. It also mars historical scholarship in two different and opposite ways. The historian betrays his bias by making a subjective classification of the persons appearing in his narrative, and then deciding to give some of them the full honorific treatment and leaving the others in the humiliating nakedness of their names. Thus a critic of the Jamaat-i-Islami lets Maududi stand without the robes of a Mawlana but dresses up the Muslim League figures in all their tokens of honour. A Congressite chronicler forgets to pay due homage to the Muslim League leadership but makes it a point to call Abul Kalam Azad a Mawlana every time he is mentioned. To a historian sympathetic to the Majlis-i-Ahrar every leader of his own party is either an Amir-i-Shariat or an Allama or a Mawlana or at the least a Mawlawi, while others don't even rate as Misters.

It is interesting to observe that it is the Muslim leaders alone who are subjected to this discriminatory bias: a pointer to the political axe which the historian grinds. It is also employed as a knife to separate the Muslim personalities from the non-Muslim personages. With rare exceptions (and these belong to the pro-Congress group), the historian writing in Urdu reserves all honours and titles for the Muslims. His own heroes appear in purple and gold. The poor non-Muslim stands only in his own skin. Every Muslim leader is an Allama or a Mawlawi or a Mawlana or a Hazrat or at the lowest a Janab. But on the other side, Gandhi has shed his badge of Mahatama, C. R. Das his title of Deshbandhu, Tilak his honorific of Lokmania, even the Nehrus have lost their caste-name of Pandit. There is no logic in this discrimination, only political enmity and a determination to be rude.

This absence of politeness is reinforced with another mark of discourtesy supplied by the rules of Urdu grammar. In an Urdu

sentence the verb endings correspond to the number of the subject. That happens in most languages of the world. But this canon gains special significance from a peculiar Urdu tradition (inherited from both its parents, Persian and the various Prakrits of north India) of using a plural pronoun for a singular individual in order to show respect. Every person who stands in a relationship of esteem to you must be mentioned as if he were a plural noun or pronoun; a plural verb follows automatically. Thus the English "Mian Shafi writes" becomes in Urdu "*Mian Shafi likhte hain*". Now the point I am leading to is that the Urdu historian, as a "nationalist" Pakistani, sees no reason for showing any respect to a non-Muslim leader, and therefore puts him in the singular form. But, parallel to this, he gives to a Muslim leader the dignity of a plural form. And thus we come across in the same sentence one person used as a plural noun or pronoun with a plural verb and another person as a singular noun or pronoun with a singular verb: the grammar changes with the religion of the person mentioned. This jolts the reader who is accustomed to the more neutral style of the European languages.

But the nouns, pronouns and verb endings are not the only devices of showing contempt at the disposal of the Urdu writer. To describe a perfectly normal, workaday, activity of his historical characters, he decides to use this verb and not that, and the choice is a precise reflection of his leanings towards or away from the persons he is describing. Three random actions will illustrate this.

The act of reaching a place can be recorded in four different ways. The first in the following sentences is a simple and neutral report that a certain person came or arrived, the other three are deliberate attempts at lifting the plain fact of arrival to a level where locomotion becomes a movement of dignity and its objective becomes the glorification and patronization of a humble locality:

Tin March ko Nehru Allahabad aya (or *pauhncha*).

Jab Mawlana Zafar Ali Khan Lahore tashrif laye.

Us din Mawlana Shibli ne Amritsar ko sharf-i-mulaqat bakhsha.

Mausam-i-sarma men Janab Raja Sahib Mahmudabad ka warud Kalkatta men hua.

There are two common words which can be used to report that such and such a leader said such and such a thing, but the choice between employing one or the other exposes the author's

intentions and loyalties. The Muslim leader's pronouncements are invariably recorded with the verb *farmana*, while the non-Muslim's speeches or statements are always reported with the verb *kahna*. When in a book, on page after page, and for several times on the same page, we read

Tara Singh ne kaha . . .

Sir Sayyid ne farmaya . . .

Lord Curzon ka kahna tha . . .

Mawlana Shaukat Ali farmaya karte the . . .

Sardar Patel kahta tha . . .

Khwaja Nazimuddin ka farmana tha ke . . .

Rajagopalacharia ye bat kahta tha ke . . .

Quaid-i-Azam ka farman sab ne mana

our sense of fairness finds such blatant partiality revolting. The *gaucherie* spoils the best scholarship. Even when the prose is well written it reads like a piece of tinsel journalism.

The Urdu historian is consistent, if nothing else. His enemies remain enemies for ever and his heroes stay heroes evermore. Even in reporting the historical figure's last act, of leaving this world, the author persists in the variation of his language. The Hindu politician and the British governor or viceroy simply dies; the Muslim leader, even of the lowest rank, surrenders his soul to his Maker in peace and with dignity:

Jab Viceroy mar gia . . .

Moti Lal Nehru ki maut ke ba'd.

Us din Sir Manohar Lal ki maut waqia hui.

Mian Fazl-i-Husain aj intiqal kar gae.

Agle sal Mawlana faut ho gae.

Ab to ye tamam hastian Allah ko piari ho chuki hain.

Allama ke intiqal-i-pur-malal ke roz . . .

When it is remembered that the substantive verbs used in all the examples given in the preceding three paragraphs are accompanied by pronouns and auxiliary verbs which are plural in the case of the Muslims and singular in the case of the non-Muslims, there can be no misunderstanding at all about the author's intent or point of view or pattern of behaviour.

We have not yet exhausted the capacity of the Urdu language to put a man in his place, and the Urdu writer's zeal for exploiting this grammar-given expedient. In English there is only one way of addressing a person: you; the thee and thou went out of use two hundred years ago. In French, German and Spanish there are two forms of address, but only one, the standard equivalent of the English "you" (*vous* and *Sie*), is used in historical narration, as is the Spanish *usted*; the French *tu* and the German *du* are confined to everyday intimate conversation. But Urdu has the distinction (shared, as far as I know, only with one other language, the Amharic of Ethipia) of grading the addressee in three categories, each assigning him to one particular economic or social class or line of relationship. A person addressed as *tu* (Urdu, not French) is either a child or a very close friend or a servant (or somebody of this level); with *tum* he becomes an equal of the speaker; the *ap* is reserved for the elders, the respectable strangers, the formal relationships, and the upper classes.

There are historical reasons for this anxiety to define a man's position in society. Urdu was born and brought to maturity in a foreign imperial court, where status decided man's destiny, where power lifted man a long way above other humans, where money wrought miracles, where race was the trump card, and where every man and woman and slave knew his or her place and was reminded of it until the end came. Credentials were worn as livery, every man carried a badge and lived by it, class was a prison, and everyone was treated according to his station in life — in this society, which lived and died in a hierarchy whose steps and rungs were fixed from above, it was necessary to address a person in keeping with his class. Hence the aristocracy, the middle class, and the rest. Hence the pronouns to go with each group. Feudalism moulded grammar.

While Urdu grammar was determined by Mughal imperialism, Urdu prose style was shaped by Muslim history. The Pakistani Urdu historian who has different verbs and pronouns for the Muslim and the non-Muslim can quote centuries of practice as authority. The use of words to denigrate the *Ajami* (metaphorically speaking; later the *Ajami* ruled the Islamic world empire far longer than the *Arabi*) and the *kafir* and to glorify the Arab and the Muslim began very early in Islam. The general opinion that the Muslims were born historians needs correction: they were born biographers; in their case, history was a child of biography. The Arab obsession

with his geneology and with the necessity of recalling the achievements of the tribe sired the art of the *tazkira*. The earliest *tazkiras* were not biographies but collections of biographical notices, the harbingers of later biographical dictionaries.

The first compilers of this literature were inspired by awe, the call of religion, spiritual authority, high esteem and, above all, by the Prophetic traditions. They began to collect material on and about the Prophet's life and career. Then gradually they cast their net wider and included, in their search, facts and dates and events relating to the companions of the Prophet, the companions of the companions, their successors, the first four *khalifas*, the kings, the saints, the "friends of God", the pious, the princes, the tribal chiefs, and other prominent figures.

It is very important to remember that piety and deference were the foundations of this exercise. All the subjects of this research were either religious authorities or secular lords. In both cases, a profoundly respectful attitude was a primary requirement. The result was a tribute, not a critical assessment. When, later, these compilations emerged as the major source of history, the chroniclers took over, unconsciously and as a matter of course, the respectful attitude from the biographers and made it a part of history writing. Hence the plural pronouns and verbs, hence the hesitancy to criticise a great man, and hence the failure to consider anyone outside the pale of Islam as entitled to common regard.

The nature of the Islamic society (in common with all oriental groups) reinforced this habit of writing history as if it were an act of homage. Three social pressures worked to this end. First, the society was tribal in nature, and the head of the tribe or the chief of the clan enjoyed superior authority. Later the *pater familias*, both in the extended and the nuclear family, inherited this position. Secondly, the Quran itself laid down certain values to regulate and establish family life, which included esteem for the elder and absolute obedience of the parents. Thirdly, the spiritual and moral life of the society was supervised and overseen by the elders and the *muhtasib*, who were charged with the responsibility of keeping it pure and straight, and who enjoyed the required powers of correction and punishment.

By and large, this kind of society continued to exist in all Islamic countries till about forty or fifty years ago. The elders were

respected and feared and obeyed. This attitude was so deeply ingrained in the collective psyche of the people that even in his absence an older person — brother, sister, cousin, brother-in-law, father's or brother's friend, neighbour — was mentioned with an honorific added to his name and in the pronoun of the plural number.

The society was also, for the most part, feudal and imperial. The consideration shown to the elders of the tribe and family and locality was automatically extended to the courtier, the landholder, the saint and the merchant. An unwritten but highly formalized and perfectly understood system of deferential relationships governed all aspects of life. When contemporary reports and historical chronicles came to be written, their language reflected the set of observed rules and traditions.

Here it is instructive to recall that the Islamic *milieu* was by no means unique in this respect. The two societies with which Indian Muslims came into the closest contact — the Hindu and the British — were founded on the same broad principles. In the Hindu society, the head of the joint family and the husband and the *prohat* possessed and exercised an authority even greater than that of the Muslim head of the family and the *mawlawi*. British social life till the end of the Victorian era was arranged in a clearly defined network of relationships which was deeply conservative and reverential and rested upon an unchallangeable superiority of the parents over their children and of the affluent over the poor. The rules governing the amount of respect to be shown to different individuals and classes were rigid and were rarely breached. The nineteenth-century forms of address, employed in writing or speaking to those occupying higher stations in society, were no less formal, prolix and deferential than the *alqab* in use in Iran and Muslim India.

The twentieth century, and especially the first World War, turned the British society upside down by laying axe to the root of many institutions and traditions. Universal suffrage, grassroots political parties, enhanced parliamentary authority, an enlarged middle class, high taxation of the rich, extension of education, a weakened feudal class — all these developments produced an egalitarian society which was less deferential and more independent. In the writing of history, the result was the development of a critical approach which insisted on assessing and passing judgements on the elders of history. That is when modern historiography was born.

The post-1947 Hindu society has also been undergoing radical changes. What is worth noticing is that of all the brown and black races once in the British Empire, the Hindus alone have learnt from the imperial rulers the art of preserving the past and studying it in a critical spirit. The Indian archives, collections of private papers, libraries, centres of historical research, departments of history at the universities, and the facilities and resources for historical study are far in advance of those to be found in any other Third World country. The results are before us: historical scholarship of a very respectable standard, professors of history of international reputation, a continuous stream of well-researched publications, efficient bibliographical and documentation services, and a rising credit of achievement in the world. Today, South Asian history, as accepted and read and taught throughout the world including the Muslim countries, has the shape and form and contour which the Indian historians have given it.

This interest, amounting to a passion, in history writing is a result of the changes in the Indian society, and the most decisive factor in the transformation has been the birth of democracy and the demise of feudalism. And that is where the contrast with Pakistan strikes home. Pakistan is still struggling to establish a viable representative political system, and its politics and society continue to be in the grip of an unbridled, adamantine and ambitious feudal class which is courted by both the armed forces and the major political parties. Unless real democracy comes to the country and reshapes it in its own image, the traditional uncritical ways of looking at and recording the past will hold the field.

Finally, two additional problems created by the Urdu style of history writing need to be mentioned. The first relates to the state of thinking of a historian who chooses to write in Urdu and also in English. The attitudes, styles, modes and approaches demanded by the two languages are set so apart that one wonders if any writer can possess the agility and the sleight-of-hand to work the marvel.

The second difficulty appears when an Urdu history book is sought to be translated into English or *vice versa*. How can the plural pronouns and verbs and other expressions of deep respect be transferred intact to an English text? Conversely, how can a straightforward modern English narration be conveyed faithfully in Urdu without extrapolations of vernacular expressions and social courtesies? And, with these unwarranted additions will the

translation be acceptable to the scholars as correct and faithful? These problems are aggravated in the translation of a biography.

In the fourth place, the Urdu language lacks much of the critical apparatus of modern research. The initial difficulty is that there are no officially standardized or generally recognized Urdu equivalents of the following phrases, words and indications (and their accepted abbreviations):

circa	(*circ., c.*)
et sequentia	(*et. seq., et. seqq., et. sq., et. sqq.*)
ibidem	(*ib., ibid.*)
idem	(*id.*)
infra	(*inf.*)
idem quod	(i.*q.*)
loco citato	(*loc. cit.*)
loquitur	(*loq.*)
opere citato	(op. cit.)
quod vide	(q.v.)
sequentes	(*sq.*)
sequentia	(*sqq.*)
supra	(*sup.*)
vide	(*v.*)

These are some of the most commonly used signs; there are several others. They are common to all the languages of Western Europe because of their Latin origin. Their absence in Urdu means that no modern research is possible, and also that no research work in any European language can be translated correctly and faithfully into Urdu.

This omission has further consequences. Proper footnotes cannot be given without these indications. In fact, there is no word in Urdu for "footnote" (*hashia* does not mean the same thing).

Then there are no facilities in Urdu to print words or passages in capital letters or in italics, and therefore no means of indicating in a translation that in the original such and such words or phrases appear thus.

There is no word for "column" in Urdu, which makes it difficult to cite full reference to a newspaper or to the proceedings of parliamentary debates.

Bibliographies in Urdu books are extremely defective on two points. In general, they are incomplete. They don't give all the information needed by a scholar on the items listed. It is common to find the author's name not given in full, or the sub-title of the book omitted, or the place of publication given incorrectly or not at all, or the edition of the book not properly indicated. A second difficulty arises from the failure of Urdu scholars to have agreed upon a standard transcription of European words and letters. The Western orientalists did this for the oriental languages a hundred years ago and have since then been improving it continuously. The lack of this attempt in Urdu makes it impossible to lsit an English publication in the bibliography in the Urdu script. If it is included in the original English, the fact that Urdu is written from right to left and English from left to right results in a mix-up. The bibliographies in the *Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam*, published by the University of the Punjab, are at times impossible to read.

Indexing is not as common in Urdu books as it should be, and an analytical index is a rarity. One factor which adds to the difficulty of indexing proper names is the lack of surnames in our society. The author does not know how to handle a name, and the reader has to locate it by looking it up at more than one place. Were the Pakistan Government to order the adoption of a system of surnames for its citizens, as the Turkish regime did under Ataturk, this would not only facilitate the compilation of indices, biographies, bibliographies and other works of reference, but also help to keep better records in the government departments, election commissions and courts of law.

Finally, as a result of all the imperfections discussed above the Urdu scholars have not been able to prepare good works of reference. The biggest attempt of this kind is the multi-volume *Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam* compiled and prepared by the University of the Punjab. In the articles on modern history I have found it completely unreliable, teeming with factual mistakes and incorrect dates, badly arranged, poorly written, and providing misleading and grossly inadequate bibliographies. If an enterprise which took nearly forty years to complete, enjoyed the patronage of the government and had the co-operation of most of the historians of the country,

has produced these results, there is no point in scrutinzing the dozens of Urdu encyclopaedias, guides and similar compilations crowding our bookshop and library shelves.

For the same reasons the quality of work done at the universities for doctoral degrees is extremely poor. The pity of it is that the government's bounty of a "Ph.D. allowance" of Rs. 1,500 a month to all its employees has sent a large number of college lecturers scrambling to the universities to get the required degree to earn a lifelong free pension additional to their normal salaries. By a coincidence the official generosity came at a time when the educational system was turning its back upon English. The result is horrifying: lecturers who teach in Urdu from Urdu books and have not read anything since they entered the profession and whose low proficiency in English does not qualify them to comprehend the English source material and who have no sense of history, are getting Ph.D. degrees as a business investment not as an academic interest. Nothing better could have been devised to demolish the use, value and prestige of the highest academic degree in a discipline more effectively and completely. The Ph.D. allowance ought to be renamed "incentive to inability allowance".

I wish to emphasize that the above remarks on the inadequacies and blemishes of the Urdu language as a medium of historical research and writing are not meant to discourage people from doing their work in Urdu. My intention has been to indicate the difficulties and problems which confront the Urdu historian. If he is made aware of his handicaps, there are greater chances that he would try to overcome them. A concerted effort by those who want to write in Urdu and are interested in history might, over a period of time, develop the language to a level where it can compete with English in vocabulary, narration, analysis, research technique and style. Till then they must learn English well enough to read the sources and the other historians. But even when they have reached the stage where they can produce respectable Urdu historiography, they shall still have to keep up their English. Given our historical association with Britain, no modern historian, irrespective of the language in which he writes, can afford to stop learning English — the language in which fate has embodied his history.

CHAPTER 5

INSULT AND INJURY:
PUBLISHERS AND REVIEWERS

The Publishers

After a long struggle with all the hazards, odds, risks and perils described in the earlier chapters, and with himself, the historian comes to the end of his journey: he has written a book. But this is not the close of his sufferings. Another vale of despondency has to be crossed. He must find a publisher.

There are five doors at which he may knock. The first is a British or American publishing house, but it rarely opens for him. Its standards are high and its decisions are made by established scholars, not by booksellers turned publishers. If he is lucky enough to get an entry, his book will be superbly edited and finely produced. But he will have to wait for two to three years, and the final product will be expensive. For all that, the academic advantages are immense. The volume will be advertised, both in leading newspapers and professional and trade journals, reviewed in a large number of scholarly journals by other historians of equal or, more often, higher standing, and will sell widely throughout the English-speaking world and outside it. With the poor quality of scholarship at home and the declining skill in the use of the English language the Pakistani historian's chances of getting published abroad are remote.

The second door is even harder to enter, not because of its exacting standards but because of its extraneous considerations.

Some departments of government eccasionally publish a scholarly book. The directorate of archaeology has issued a few volumes, and some were put forth by the Pakistan Publications, a front name for the federal Ministry of Information. Nobody knows how the manuscripts were invited or selected and who made the final decisions. The quality of printing and get-up were uninspiring. We also don't know how well the author was paid, or if he was paid at all.

In the late 1960s, at the initiative of Mumtaz Hasan of the National Bank of Pakistan who was a patron of letters, the federal government established the National Publishing House in Karachi, which was run efficiently and published a few works of historical scholarship. For reasons not made public it was closed down after three years of operation, leaving its authors unpaid and its publications unsold.

The third door carries discreet name plates, but is in fact a government enterprise. There are a large number of State-controlled and State-financed research organizations which also publish books written by their own staff and by outsiders. The quality is uneven, both in scholarship and in printing. The procedure of selection is cumbersome, time-wasting and humiliating. In some cases, the committee or board which takes the final decision is made up of a few academics who have not published anything and a few civil servants. The prospective authors are treated like applicants for a job. As for the payment, at some places a fixed royalty is offered, and at others the book is rated at so much per page as if it were a column or a piece of translation. Two serious drawbacks of these institutions impair their usefulness. Living on government money and headed by government officials, they will publish only conformist history. Secondly, not being commercial minded, they don't exert themselves to increase the sale and circulation of their publications. There is a general complaint that more of their stock is to be found in their storehouses than at the bookshops. The publication officer is a clerk, not a business manager.

The fourth door, which should have been, by all legitimate expectations, a portal of impressive proportions open to easy and fast traffic, is in fact a small window in the gate, hard to open and harder to get in. This is the university press. In respect of acting as normal and well-known channels of the best of national scholarship we have no university presses. In the West they are the most

prestigious publishers of academic books, encouraging new authors, commissioning works of research, preparing dictionaries and other works of reference of the highest quality, and publishing much of the country's finest scholarship. As profit making is not their major aim, they spend more than other publishers do on paper, printing, binding and advertising. They also undertake the preparation and publication of many large works of compiling and editing (collected works and letters, bibliographies, multi-volume histories, bulky surveys, etc.) which are not money making propositions and which commercial publishers will not touch.

Most Pakistani universities are not publishers. Two or three have a university press which publishes books at odd intervals when fancy moves it, or when the Vice-Chancellor is interested in an author or is himself an author. As for paying royalties or buying a manuscript, if my own experience is a guide, the author is neither paid nor sent a statement of the sale of his book, nor are his letters and reminders acknowledged.

Thus, what should have been the principal outlet for the best scholarly and academic work done in the country has been blocked by the indifference and neglect of the universities themselves. Centres of learning and research have abandoned the task of spreading their learning and making the fruits of their research available to the public.

By a process of elimination, the historian is thus compelled to seek a commercial publisher (the fifth door). The fly invites itself into the spider's web, and makes a delectable morsel for the spider. It is no exaggeration to say that, barring rare exceptions, all local publishers are dishonest in one way or another. Some (including a few official institutes and university presses) do not pay anything to the author, a legal, written contract notwithstanding. Others print up to double the number of copies stipulated in the agreement, depriving the author of all income on the extra copies. Some indulge in both the practice. So much for their honesty.

Courtesy also is not among their virtues. The author is shown no respect or consideration. His inquiries are shelved. He is denied the information to which he is entitled. His letters are not answered. He is not sent regular statements of sale. His royalties are not paid on time. In short, he is treated as a supplicant, not as a hard-working

scholar on whose labour and ability the publisher is fattening himself.

Some of these evils might have been tolerated had the publisher acquitted himself well in the fields of efficiency and technical skill. But greed and the craving for making quick money have overwhelmed him. Most of our publishers started as booksellers, and the mentality of a shopkeeper has not left them. They look at the author as legitimate material for exploitation, and at the book as no more than an article of merchandise. There is no pride in publishing a good author, no satisfaction in presenting a well got-up book, no sense of pleasure in being a publisher and not being a shoemaker or a tailor. Publishing is strictly a business ----- and everybody knows what that means in Pakistan.

Essential and indispensable services and facilities are not offered by the publisher. He has no "readers" ------ recognized scholars who read a manuscript relating to their special field of research and give a careful and impartial report on its fitness for publication, often suggesting alterations, additions and deletions for the consideration of the author. The reader's recommendations are not binding on the publisher or the author, but a sensible publisher and an intelligent author will give them full attention, and in all cases accept at least some of them. The changes suggested by the reader always help to improve the quality of the book.

The publisher also has no copy editors on his staff. If the publisher be likened to a builder, the copy editor is the architect. The manuscript submitted by an author, however experienced, gains in presentation at the hands of the copy editor. Sometimes, a very competent piece of research work, like a good doctoral thesis, will make an unreadable book if published as it is. The copy editor will turn it into a pleasant, manageable, easy to read volume. He may spot minor technical or typographical mistakes, and also enliven the style by removing slips of the pen and altering the sentence structure. He selects the format of the book, and chooses the most suitable types for the title-page, the dedication, the table of contents, the chapter headings, the text and the long quotations in it, the footnotes, the appendices and the index. He supervises the proof-reading at all stages, and his hawk-eyed attention to detail rarely lets a misprint pass. He looks after the binding, choosing the colour of the cloth and the lettering on the spine. He guides the artist in the designing of the dust-jacket and approves the final choice.

In sum, the copy editor puts new life and face into the raw manuscript and gives the soul of knowledge as beautiful a body as he can. His uses are legion. The publisher who issues a book without his services does not take his profession seriously and, in the bargain, inflicts a cruel injury on the work of his author whose reputation he destroys irreparably.

The standard of proof-reading has fallen in Europe in the last twenty-five years, but it might come as a surprise to many that in Pakistan a few publishers, including some reputable names, don't have any proof-reading facility; and, if they have, it makes no real difference. The author is sent galley proofs in small print to pour over, all his corrections are not made in the page proofs, sometimes a correction is made but two fresh errors crop up in the same line. It is not very uncommon to have a whole line missing or printed twice. A book on which the author has spent years of hard work appears with an average of one misprint per page. The publisher does not realize, because he has never sat in scholarly company, that the reviewers, academic readers and experts may know that a word has been misspelt and attribute it to bad printing, but they have no way of checking if a wrong date or figure is due to the publisher's fault or the author's ignorance. That is where bad proof-reading becomes unforgivable.

Another weak department in the publishing business is the bindery. The Urdu books are the worst examples of this. Some improvement has been effected in recent years in English language publishing but the result is far from satisfactory. It is not that the skill and the resources are wanting. I have seen a few, very few, books bound as they should be. But the general workmanship remains poor. It is sad to find some scholarly books of permanent value coming apart after one reading. What happens to them in a library after two borrowings must be a nightmare for the librarian. The publisher is gathering curses like a magnet.

By all accounts, the worst failing of the Pakistani publications is the illustrations and photographs. Like binding, this is a deliberate choice. When I showed to one publisher the illustrations in the advertisements of the Karachi monthly *Herald*, commenting upon their quality and asking why his books could not have reproductions of the same standard, he said he could not afford the cost. His explanation is completely unacceptable. In historical writings, photographs and illustrations fulfil a purpose far from the merely

decorative. And if he is right, the country should despair of publishing any books on archaeology and art — a dreadful prospect!

The publisher's greed in another direction also serves to subvert the author's interest. Many publishers, perhaps the majority, are also booksellers. They try to sell as many copies of their publications as they can out of their own bookshop, in order to save the 40 to 50 per cent commission which they would be paying to another bookseller to sell their books. This unethical practice restricts the availability and circulation of the book, thus adversely affecting its sale. The author is paid a mere 7 to 10 per cent royalty on his manuscript (that is if he is lucky), while the bookseller gets 5 to 6 times that amount for just stocking the book and selling it to a buyer who walks into the shop. The poor author is helpless against this outrageous system. His royalty depends on the pleasure of the publisher. The scholarly author, who does not write for money and whose primary object is to gain as wide a reading public as possible, is hit by the slowness of the sale of his work. It is quite possible that many people will not be able to buy it because their local bookstore doesn't have it. In the outlying stations even libraries may not purchase it for lack of opportunity. The publisher can afford to play this game because his margin of profit is so large that he breaks even after selling the first 200 copies (the usual print order is 700-1,000). He can wait a little for his profit, which will now come in one hundred per cent solidity.

For similar parsimonious reasons, the publisher rarely advertises his publications. Why should he squander his money on informing the public about what he has published? With such a short print-run, he is bound to sell his stock sooner or later — a little later is better with greater profit. Three other factors work in his favour. There are no book sales of indigenous publications. Therefore an interested reader with modest means cannot wait to acquire the book. Secondly, there are no "remainders" in the Pakistani book trade, as there are all over the world. Our publisher is so avaricious that even after making a good profit on a book he will not dispose of the remaining copies to make room for new publications. Finally, there are no secondhand bookshops in the country. Even if it takes a publisher twenty years to sell out the book he knows that his market is safe, because there is no other channel through which a purchaser can acquire that publication at less than the market price.

The last sin for which the publisher has to answer is his failure to send out enough (in some cases any) review copies. He has little interest in getting the book noticed in foreign journals. His lack of education is responsible for this shortsighted decision. He ought to be told three things by someone with any influence on him. First, for a scholar it is imperative that the existence of his work is made known to the international academic community in his field. With educational standards falling steeply in the country, and scholarship commanding less and less respect, and the ability to read an English book with any degree of comprehension disappearing fast, the Pakistani scholar with some worth to his work will be read more in foreign parts than at home. Secondly, foreign librarians and scholars make most of their purchases on the strength of the reviews they read in the academic journals. Even a few reviews abroad will help to sell a couple of hundred copies. Thirdly, qualified reviewers are so hard to come by in Pakistan that unless the book is reviewed outside it will not be noticed even by the local scholars.

Within the country the publisher does not dispatch copies to all leading newspapers, magazines and academic journals and then wait for the reviews to appear. His methods are different and are varied to suit the circumstances. If the author is a well-known person or a prominent public figure whose good opinion he does not want to lose, he goes to the editor and begs the favour of a good review. Such visits are really unnecessary. The editor himself does not want to do anything to annoy the well-known man. I have never read a bad or even a critical review of any of I. H. Qureshi's or Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada's books. This is a case of the (Pakistani variety of) esteem due to the holder of a high official position being transferred to an entirely different sphere of activity. One who is or has been a Minister is as much above the normal standards of scholarly test as above the law of the land. Works by Winston Churchill and Arnold Toynbee and Henry Kissinger can get savage reviews in their own countries — but then that is a different world to which we will never belong!

Some publishers have enough influence in the editor's office to ask and be given the services of a particular reviewer who promises to praise the book. Or, they send the book to a columnist or a professional reviewer who is their friend and will do anything to oblige them, and who knows that what he sends in is printed by the editor without scrutiny. I also know some cases where a publisher

got a review written by none else than the author of the book himself and was able to get it printed in newspapers which could not be classified as gutter press. To a lesser extent, similar practices prevail in the few academic and scholarly journals that we have.

But the publisher must not carry the entire blame in this free-for-all in the reviewing world. His anxiety to have his publications well reviewed is understandable. If his efforts to achieve this purpose lead him to unethical practices, well! he is living in a jungle where reviewers eat writers and he must protect his own authors. For the self-respecting scholar these wiles may be a trial. But, how many of us have, in the last forty years, been brave or foolish enough to retain any vestige of self-esteem? You cannot live in Pakistan by the standards of Western scholarly and editorial integrity.

The Reviewers

This brings me to the last disappointment faced by the Pakistani historian (and scholar in every field). But before discussing the state of book reviewing in Pakistan, let me say a few words about the utility and value of the practice in general. Personally I don't attach much importance to the reviews, no matter who writes them and where they appear. Ultimately, and even in terms of contemporary reputation, a book is judged in its own right and by its own quality. The reader finds it useful, pleasant, good, a waste of time, ureadable, biased, misleading, enjoyable or outstanding — his assessment is personal, though made in the light of his knowledge, what he is looking for, his purpose, his reason for reading it, and his own background. Scholars may and often do differ in their opinions of it. But within a few years of its appearance the book finds its proper place in the literature of its field and subject. Students read it, research workers consult it, scholars refer to it, professors recommend it, bibliographers include it in their compilations — the book has achieved a reputation, good or bad or middling, and all these people who have, directly or indirectly, acted to give it its proper place don't give a d— to what the reviewers wrote about it when it was first published. A few of them might have been influenced by a review which they saw before reading the book. Even the effect of the review on their minds might have been dissipated by the actual reading of the book. Then, as happens most of the time, a book may, on its appearance, get a series of reviews ranging from

high praise to severe condemnation — all published in respectable journals and written by recognized scholars. Which of these does one accept as the true judgement? I have seen four reviews of an important book done by the same person in four different journals over a period of eighteen months, and discovered significant shifts in the reviewer's position. Which of these is his final judgement? Such contradictions and problems abound in the art and practice of book reviewing.

Granted that the librarians will order a book if they see a good review of it. Granted that the scholars and experts will talk for a few weeks about a book which has received consistently favourable comments. Granted that a few people will be so impressed by a review that they will immediately go out and buy it; conversely, a few people will not buy it after reading a bad review. But, at the most, the best or the worst reviews will affect a very small number of people for a short period of time.

In literature books have their fashions. The best seller of today may be no more than a name, perhaps not even that, in ten years' time. A novelist who wrote fifty years ago and could not be a success may have a revival, get his reprints well reviewed, win a new readership, even become a celebrity. Literary reputations have a way of rising again. Literature reflects the contemporary society and is a mirror of its values. Society changes, and with the change come new standards, new sensibilities, new ways of looking at things, new ambitions, new needs. Poets and novelists, themselves products of this change, speak for or depict the changed or changing society. The old novelist becomes obsolete, irrelevant, unreadable. And yet old authors continue to have periodical revivals and resuscitations. Charles Dickens had had two so far, Thomas Hardy and Rudyard Kipling one each, Swinburne is on his way back, Thomas Mann is being reprinted and translated in paperbacks. Literature never dies; fashions in literature come and go.

I don't think there are such disappearances and comebacks in historical scholarship. Partly because, rare exceptions apart, history books do not figure in the lists of best sellers. They are never a rage. They are read consistently by a class which replenishes itself every year with the universities' sending out their fresh harvest of graduates. This readership is loyal, interested, concerned, almost professional (though in the West a large circle reads history for pleasure), enlightened, critical, questioning. Its energy is unflagging.

its curiosity unending, its appetite for new facts and fresh interpretations unappeased, its love for the past unabated, its historical vision undimmed. It reads ancient historians, medieval chroniclers, modern scholars and contemporary commentators in search of its roots and the path of its evolution. As long as man wants to know where he has come from and by what routes and through which convulsions, he will read history. He will go to a book because he has an unquenchable thirst for knowledge, not because he has read a review which recommends a new volume.

Smaller than this general readership is the professional class which reads history as an academic discipline. Students read it because they have chosen it as a subject of their study (the choice is voluntary and a reflection of their interest). Teachers read it because it is both their interest (sometimes an obsession) and their vocation (in the fullest sense of the word). Private scholars read it because they are writing on it.

This group is both devoted in commitment and large in number. The devotion comes from the genuineness of their concern and from the absence of any vested interest.

Take the student class. An undergraduate in America and Europe takes up history as a subject, not because, as in Pakistan, he thinks it is an easy path to an easy degree or because his father or uncle insists on it, but because his schooling has been so good that he is capable of deciding which subject he would like to read further at the university. He studies it, not merely in order to take a degree, but for training his mind and educating his sensibilities. Therefore he reads widely and with a will. Similar enthusiasm and zeal drive the school teacher and the university don. They have made history their lifelong interest, not a means of livelihood. Their own interest and devotion, sufficient unto themselves, are sharpened and deepened by their mentally agile pupils and by the virtues of the educational system. They keep themselves abreast of current findings by reading most of what is published. They also write advanced textbooks and scholarly volumes. The private historian is the most disinterested and loyal worshipper at the shrine of Clio, because he works neither to earn a living nor to teach a class, but simply to advance his own knowledge and to share his fund of discoveries with other historians.

The size of this group is important, because it is indicative of the value a society and its educational system place on the study of

history. In European universities the single largest undergraduate following in the humanities is shared between literature and history; history has a slight edge because it is also considered as a social science and taught at many institutes where literature is not available as a subject. (I don't count the study of modern advanced economics, statistics, business administration, public administration, and other such subjects as part of a liberal education).

Moreover, at many universities an undergraduate can read history alone for his degree, without combining it with another subject. (The only other subject to enjoy this prerogative is literature.) This means a large body of history students. Inevitably, this calls for large departments. Taken collectively, the history dons outnumber their colleagues in all other liberal disciplines. A good number of historians are also working in departments and institutes of area studies, regional studies, political science, law, anthropology, comparative religion, oriental studies, theology, Islam, culture and civilization, classics, languages, etc. This does not exhaust their usefulness and demand. Many historians are employed in full-time capacity by departments of State, research secretariats of political parties and trade unions, civil service and armed forces training institutes, international organizations, editorial boards and committees of encyclopaedias and other large works of reference, and research societies and academies.

Estimated figures speak for the numbers involved. A large European country has about fifty universities, each having, say, 1,000 history students and 30-40 history teachers. That makes a total of 50,000 students and 1,500-2,000 history dons. Another 250-500 historians will be working at other places — giving a firm figure of 2,000 per country. In Europe alone we have say half a million students and about 10,000-15,000 dons. The United States, Canada and South America, New Zealand and Australia taken together must have a figure surpassing this. So, in the West, there are, at any one time, over one million students and 50,000 professionals reading, teaching and writing history. This indomitable force has to be fed continuously with books and articles. If a Western historian does not write, his numerous colleagues and even more numerous students will look at him with contempt. If even half of them stop their research work, the flow of historical knowledge will dry up.

I have digressed a little with a view to providing an explanation for the existence of the large number of academic

journals in the West. These are needed to pass on the findings and interpretations of the historians to their own professionals class. To keep this class informed of the literature being produced, the journals have to review the new publications. Thus the reviews began as a purely support service to the historian. Gradually they grew longer, more serious, more analytical and comparative, and their latest incarnation is the "review article", which has in many cases become less of a review of the books listed under the title-line and more of the author's disparate ideas, reflections and impressions arranged in some order.

Now obviously a very small portion of the Western historian community reads more than a few of the several thousand reviews which appear in the journals. The rest leaf through the articles of their interest, and then proceed to their normal work of reading books, old and new. They prefer to go through a new volume and form their own judgement of it. The best qualified and the most honest reviewer has his predilections, prejudices, points of view, weaknesses, and gaps in his knowledge. A lazy historian may read the reviews more often and carefully, partly to utilize them to impress his colleagues and students with the pretension that he has mastered the new publications, and partly to use them in his writings. A cautious scholar may order a copy of the reviewed book after reading a good notice, but he will not take the reviewer's opinion on trust. He will read the book when he has the time to do so and will judge it himself.

If we pick up any good book on history written in the last one hundred years and reflect over its reputation and longevity, and make some inquiries, we will find that the book has been read over the years not because it was well reviewed on its first apperance but because of its inherent worth. The greatest of the historians — Ranke, Acton, Toynbee — did not escape criticism at the hands of their reviewers. Their names are the unsetting stars in the firmament of historiography; the reviewers had their one infamous day and are gone. The world continues to read and re-read the works of modern historians like H. Buckle, H. Butterfield, George Elton, Lucien Febvre, Jules Michelet, Henri Pirenne, George Trevelyan, A. Touraine and Marc Bloch, and of the theoreticians of history like G. Vico, J. Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, Max Weber, Isaiah Berlin, F. Brandel, N. Chomsky, Bernard Croce, W. Dilthey, Karl Popper and M. Polanyi, as much for instruction as for pleasure. Does anyone

recall or care to know how they were reviewed when they came out? Good reviewers and bad, honest ones and dishonest ones, big names and small — all are forgotten; the books they reviewed live.

In fact, if someone would look into this matter and prepare a documented study of the reviews of, say, fifty well-known works of scholarship and fifty obscure history books of the last fifty years, in all probability his evidence will shock the modern reviewer. The investigation might show that several books of profound influence and permanent value were either condemned, ridiculed and slighted or given a reluctant and grudging reception by the reviewers, and as many indifferent or completely worthless histories drew wild praises from the same or other reviewers.

Thus the importance or value of reviews, even in the West, should not be overestimated. In any case, no reader or scholar should permit a reviewer, even the best one, to stand between him and the book. In a country like Pakistan, the reviews are not only ignorant and superficial and disingenuous — they are a menace to scholarship. Let us survey the matter closely.

It has been said many times and by many lips that those who can, write books, and those who can't, write reviews. This is not a *bon mot* but an exact description of the stitutation in Pakistan. Here, book reviewing is done selectively, badly and dishonestly. All the major or important works cannot be reviewed, either by the leading English-language newspapers or by the academic journals (the Urdu newspapers' notices, which appear at very irregular intervals, are unprintable before they are published and unreadable after). As no newspaper or journal has a qualified review editor, and the editor himself is not properly educated, the books to be reviewed are selected at random. The editor may be personally interested in a book because the author is his friend, or the publisher may have persuaded him, or somebody in the establishment may have telephoned him, or he and the author may have a common friend, or for some such extraneous reason which has nothing to do with the book's importance, topical relevance, inherent merit, scholarly value, or potential popular appeal. This selectivity, not based on any principle, discourages the historian. But it has also a bright side. A good book may not appear on the editor's list, and thus escape the humiliation and infamy of a bad review.

Bad and dishonest reviews go together. By bad, I don't mean unfavourable or critical or even harsh, provided that the notice is written by a qualified scholar who argues and gives reasons for his opinions. A bad reviewer is dishonest, because he reviews a book about which he knows nothing. A dishonest reviewer is bad, because he pretends to be knowledgeable when he is not and his standards of judgement are either bias or vengefulness or personal friendship or the settling of old scores. In both cases, what he writes is not a review but a motley of effusively nasty or demonstrably adulatory remarks, both rooted in ignorance and inspired by extra-academic sentiments.

Like the books to be reviewed, the reviewers too are named at random — through private contact, friendship, casual calls at the newspaper office, somebody's wish to own a free copy of a book which he cannot buy, etc. As I have mentioned before, sometimes the publisher nominates the reviewer and even gets a review written by a friend inserted in the paper. A few authors indulge in the same practice. For both, it is essential to enjoy the editor's goodwill.

The reviewer's name does not carry his address, profession or position. The reader, therefore, has no means of knowing his qualifications and fitness for sitting in judgement on works of scholarship. The well-informed among the educated are familiar with the names of the scholars in every field, and they realize that these names rarely appear at the foot of the reviews. I have never seen a review done by I.H. Qureshi, Aziz Ahmad, Waheeduzzaman, Yusuf Abbasi, Rafique Afzal or any other modern historian whose work is known to the readers. It is, therefore, obvious that the reviews are not written by historians. Then, who writes them?

The answer to this question points to the existence of a profession which is unique to Pakistan. The country's press and academic journals have at their command a corps of professional reviewers. This group is ready to write a review of the required length on any publication, at short or long notice, in accordance with the wishes and views of the paper or the journal. Even the possession of formal qualifications in history (or any other subject) is not required. This professional class is recruited from the journalists, college lecturers and others. An obscure college teacher of Lahore was for many years reviewing books for *The Pakistan Times*. An Army Colonel of Rawalpindi must have reviewed for the daily newspapers of Karachi and Lahore a hundred books so far, on every

subject that one can think of. A columnist of Lahore regularly writes what he calls "review articles" for a Karachi newspaper, gathering within his province books on politics, economics, history, literature, religion and what you have. A retired Air Force Officer has been reviewing, for a research quarterly of Lahore, foreign and local publications on such subjects as English Poetry, Soviet Nuclear Arms Policy, American Foreign Relations, Pakistani History, the International Economic Order, and so on.

This band of judges writes with gay abandon, complete confidence, total irresponsibility, great authority, and impenetrable ignorance. This amounts to nothing less than the appointment of a band of examiners consisting of school-leavers to test the writing ability and historical knowledge and academic standing of the best scholars of the country. Among these pen-pushers, who in their own estimation are deciding the fate of an important book and the future of an established author, there is no university professor, no recognized writer, no acknowledged historian, no respected scholar. Most of them have not written even one book in their life.

If I seem to be rather hard on them, look at the disastrous consequences of their exertions for the historian and his work. A political columnist of known views declares a major work of scholarship to be inadequate and flawed. A former lecturer in English Literature at a college turned journalist sits in judgement on a historian of international reputation and ends up with a few views of his own on the subject and some meaningless hackneyed phrases. Another college lecturer of no academic standing at all castigates a leading historian with unconcealed animosity simply because the latter did not give him a job several years ago. A public relations officer of an autonomous government organization dismisses a well-written and important treatment of a new topic as a work of no value. A college lecturer in Arabic accuses a highly-respected British (Muslim) biographer of the Prophet of expressing dangerous heresies and calls for an official ban on the book. (All these are actual cases, not imaginary examples).

This kind of reviewing puts a premium on dullness and a penalty on genius. It amounts to sustained stupidity and an incapacity which is almost inspired. The reviewer feels free to put the author on the pedestal or in the pillory, with absolutely no accountability. Feeding freely on the bread of spite "base envy hates that excellence it cannot reach". Raising high the lance of malice, the

reviewer achieves nothing but the exposure of his own ignorance. It is always easy to write about things and people one does not know; one has fewer doubts and generalizations are not difficult to make.

Such reviews damage scholarship in three ways. First, the reading public is deprived of all means of keeping itself informed of the publication and quality of new books. Secondly, the scholar is subjected to intense and gratuitous mortification. He is discouraged, and in some cases, where he is still young and in need of some public appreciation or he is a sensitive human being, he may stop writing at all. In other cases, the discouragement may adversely affect his later work: "if that is the way my labour of years is going to be treated and mud flung at me, I shall be better off doing nothing!" Thirdly, the academic world stops paying any attention to what the reviewers say. The books' page in every newspaper has lost its *raison d'etre*.

Why have things come to this strange pass? An investigation into the matter shows that the responsibility must be shared by four parties, but in unequal proportion: the editor, the reviewer, the scholar, and the public.

The editor bears the greatest blame. When he receives a book it is his duty to make a quick estimation of its importance and then to select the best person qualified to review it. The reviewer must be a recognized expert in the field, with an established reputation, enjoying general respect among his fraternity. The editor should make inquiries to find out if the reviewer has any vested interest or a personal slant or a private motive, which will distort his judgement in favour of or against the author. A general principle which the editor will be wise to follow is that the reviewer must be a scholar of superior or at least equal standing to the author; and the only way of assuring this is to scrutinize the number and quality of the books published by the reviewer. None of these things is done by the editor.

Let me elaborate how the editor should arrange things by describing what happens in an average British journal or national newspaper (of which I have first-hand experience). The paper does not usually review purely scientific or highly technical books which have a narrow appeal for the public at large. About ten books receive notice every week. The editor, himself a highly-educated person and not uncommonly an author of a few books, is capable of exercising his own judgement in assaying the general quality and

significance of a book on most subjects (thanks to his broad-based and thorough education at school and university). But his authority is only supervisory, though his responsibility is complete. He has an assistant or deputy editor in charge of book reviews, who is again a highly-educated person with some academic background. He maintains wide contacts with the universities and the private world of scholarship, and has a carefully prepared panel of experts not only in broad fields but on specialized branches within them. On each subject there are available to him four or five or more scholars. After receiving a book, it takes him about an hour to telephone the relevant experts living in the country and to find out who has the time and the inclination to review it. The volume is then posted to one of them, along with a letter containing the expected length of the review and the date by which it should reach the paper. When the review is received, it is scrutinized for any possible bias. It finally appears, with the name of the reviewer on the top or at the foot of the review, often carrying his university affiliation or some other identification. Works of specialized scholarship are invariably reviewed by experts. A book on Tudor England is never sent to a modern historian or one on the First World War to an eighteenth century scholar.

Is it impossible to have this kind of arrangement in our national English language newspapers? They have the required material resources, and they appear from cities with universities and a respectable number of private scholars. The latter statement should be read with the reservation mentioned below when I consider the scholars' responsibility.

The editor is also unforgivably careless in small details. I have seen many reviews in all newspapers (and also in some scholarly journals) which fail to furnish essential data about the book under review. Sometimes the title of the book is not given in full; it is the usual practice to omit the sub-title. The publisher's name is incomplete, and the place of publication does not appear. One usually misses the date of publication. The exact number of pages, including the differently numbered pages of the preliminaries, like the table of contents and the preface, is rarely given. The price of the book is generally not mentioned at all. This information may be of minor importance, but it is a basic requirement of every review. Without it, the scholarly reader finds it completely useless. The editor probably does not know what he has failed to do, or we would

not have a few reviews which confine themselves to giving only the title of the book and the name of the author.

Next to the editor, it is the reviewer who is at fault. In many ways his sin is the greater because the review appears under his name. If the editor asks a certain journalist to review a book, the latter should have the honesty to plead his inability and to confess his ignorance, and to say that he does not know anything about the subject and does not want to be unjust to the author. Similarly, a college lecturer should have no hesitation in refusing the commission on the ground that he is not qualified to review the book. The editor, of course, is guilty of a most serious dereliction of duty when he hands over a book for review to an unqualified person. But the reviewer, by agreeing to write the review, has taken upon himself the task of damning a book and assassinating the character of its author.

It is surprising that, by thus springing to obey the order of the editor, the reviewer gives no thought at all to two direct consequences of his foolhardiness. First, that he is committing himself to an act of gross injustice to all parties: the editor, the paper, the book, the author, and the profession of scholarship. Secondly, that, in exchange for a little money and a very transitory and cheap satisfaction at having humbled a respected scholar, he is "undressing in public" and exposing the nakedness of his own ignorance to every eye. The book will survive his strictures and live for many years. But the review may be quoted by future historians to show how a certain age treated its scholarship, and what he has written with so much misplaced vigour and ill-directed animus may stand as an indelible stain on his own name.

This kind of reviewer is not a senseless fool. The columnist's commentaries on the political controversies are knowledgeable. The lecturer has been teaching his subject for fifteen years. The odd intellectual is well read in his own field and committed to the advancement of literature. Then why does he tread the hazardous path of betraying his own self in insisting upon judging another?

The explanation lies in the national character and mentality. Unfortunately, the average Pakistani suffers from two defects of nature which neither education nor upbringing has cured: jealousy and self-importance. Jealousy consumes him like galloping tuberculosis. In every walk of life and in every relationship the green-eyed monster poisons the sweet waters of God's greatest gift.

Brother is ranged against brother, friend against friend, colleague against colleague, because one can't see the other flourishing. In politics, in business, in education, in civil service, everywhere jealousy creates enmities, intrigues, betrayals. Nobody can view with equanimity anybody else making a success of his life. Therefore, every chance to run the other down is clutched with both hands. I have heard in some private gatherings one remark which sums up the jealousy complex: "Did you read my review? He thought he was a great scholar. Let him write as many more books as he can. All of them will come to me [for review]" (the real viciousness comes out in the original Urdu or Punjabi which is not translatable: *"Parha mera review? Bara alim samajtha tha apne ap ko. Aur kitaben likhkhe. Aingi to mere pas hi na!")* This was said by a reviewer to his friends about a third party.

Self-importance brutalizes human nature even more. An inferior person in search of a superior status without wanting to work for it is capable of many injustices and cruelties. He is active in his despicable pursuit everywhere. The office clerk who raises concocted objections to make a simple case difficult; the publisher who boasts that he publishes only successful authors; the officious junior civil servant who takes airs which only befit his seniors; the legislator whose automobile carries a plaque bigger than the number plate announcing his status; the Vice-Chancellor who delays his appearance or speech at a public function until the press photographers have arrived; the bank clerk who makes you wait a quarter of an hour to impress you with his authority — all of them are pretending to be what they are not to satisfy a troublesome ego.

The reviewer belongs to the same class: a journalist who wants to be known as a man of vast learning; a columnist who has not written a book in his long life but insists on judging a new book every week; the poor lecturer, whose two books are so bad that nobody reads them, bent upon taking his revenge on life by running down a distinguished scholar. Let us be compassionate and look at his labours not as a review but as a means of assuaging the pain of his failure in life.

The third party involved in this mummery is the scholarly community. And this is where the editor can plead something in extenuation of his repeated offences. Where are the scholars, he asks, whom I can invite to review a book? This is a strong argument, though it does not acquit the editor (an honest editor should refuse

to review a book if he can't get a qualified reviewer — a simple cure for his proclivity to sin again and again). Throughout this book I have been bemoaning the inability or unwillingness or both of our historians to write something. The reasonable principle enunciated above that a reviewer must be, in the first place, a scholar himself, predicates the presence of a large number of writers who will then review one another's books. This pool does not exist.

Take a few examples. A book on Mughal revenue system appears. Is there any expert qualified to review it? Another is published on the 1857 revolt. Do we have a scholar on the theme fit to judge it? A work on the Punjab politics of 1920-40 is received from abroad. Can you find a specialist to assess it? Somebody writes a biography of A. K. Fazlul Huq. Can the country produce even one historian of modern Bengal to deal with it? Recently a collection of essays on the 1948 downfall of Hyderabad came out in the United States, and the author, a Muslim, asked me if I knew of anyone who would review it in a Pakistani paper. I was compelled to send him an honest reply the writing of which hurt me.

If Pakistani historians want their works to be reviewed properly we must have more writing historians, not merely teaching historians and popularizers. Mr. Historian, as long as this does not come about we will continue to find ourselves helpless victims of third-rate hack writers, because Mr. Editor is not amenable to the good advice that he should stop his reviewing if he has no reviewers to do the job. So, work hard, or proceed as a submissive lamb to the block of the butcher who has no conscience.

Some culpability for such reviewing also attaches to the reading public of these newspapers. Of course, the great majority of those who buy the daily paper is made up of shopkeepers, military and civil servants, businessmen, doctors, engineers, actors, film producers and people of that kind who don't even look at the book page. But there must be at least a few thousand readers who are intellectuals and men and women of literary taste, and who want to know about what has been published. This class sends letters to the editor and contributes articles on political, economic and social problems, and some of them write books. However, none of them has protested against the reviews carried by the paper he reads. There has been nothing on it in the correspondence columns, not even from the poor author whose work has been murdered by the reviewer. I can't think of any explananation for this silence. Evidently,

the best newspaper reader does not read the reviews, which makes them superfluous; or he approves of them, which makes him a collaborator in this conspiracy against scholarship.

If the reader of this book, or at least the historian, agrees with my refusal to accept these reviews as competent and honest opinions about new publications, and finds himself in a situation in which the qualified scholars do not come forth to express their views on the works of their confrers and the editors insist on publishing reviews by unqualified nonentities, then a basic problem of information arises. How do people who are interested in what is being published come to know of new books? The question assumes greater importance because book advertising does not exist in the country.

The problem can be partially solved by the academic journals, if they publish in each issue a complete list of all new books with full particulars. But even this suggestion has some drawbacks. First, the number of our scholarly journals is very small, their resources are inadequate, and their circulation is unbelievably small. Secondly, each of them concerns itself with one field — history, economics, philosophy, Islam — and its list will inevitably be a narrow one. Thirdly, it may not be possible for the journal to locate every book even in its own province of specialization. Fourthly, there are several important fields and disciplines on which no journal is published, e.g., political science, anthropology, sociology, law. Fifthly, we have no journals of broad interests, like the British *Twentieth Century* or *Contemporary Review*, which contain articles on a variety of subjects and cater to the general intellectual class (this class does not exist here). Finally, we don't publish a weekly magazine of respectable quality. For these reasons, specialized lists appearing in a few journals will not fill the gap to which I am referring.

The ideal solution would be a monthly or quarterly journal devoted to reviews and nothing else. India publishes one, and its quality is fairly high; and its usefulness is beyond question. Pakistan cannot produce this kind of a publication for the reasons discussed in the preceding pages, though this remains the most satisfactory solution of our problem — perhaps fifty years from today!

In order to meet our needs for the many years to come, I should like to submit to the book trad the following suggestion. All the publishers of the country — official and private, English and vernacular — should combine to issue a quarterly list containing

every item published during the preceding three months. In place of reviews it should carry descriptions. Complete details of the publication should be produced in this order: name of the author, title of the book, name and address of the publisher, place(s) of publication, date of publication, number of pages, and the price. In addition, the notice must make it clear whether the book is a first publication, or a reprint (if so, second or third), or a new edition (revised and/or enlarged; and the date of the previous edition or editions), or an entirely re-written version. It should also be clarified if it is an original book, or a reprint of a foreign publication, or a Pakistani edition, with some changes, of a foreign book (with the date and publisher of its original appearance). If it is a doctoral or master's thesis the fact should be mentioned along with the name of the university at which it was submitted and the date of submission. In case of a reprint of an old book the original date, title and publisher should be cited. This should be followed by a short biographical note on the author, preferably with a list of his other publications with dates. If the book carries a foreword or introduction by someone other than the author, this should be recorded. If the book contains photographs or illustrations, this should also be indicated.

All these details should form the first half of the entry. The second half should reporduce in full the table of contents of the book. Nobody can be completely trusted with the task of summarizing the contents of the book; the most conscientious clerk in the journal's office may, unwittingly, omit a point or place a wrong emphasis. The most faithful description of the book is contained in the table of contents, and that should be copied down without change, and not omitting the *apparatus criticus*, viz., references, notes, appendices, bibliography, index and, if there is one, glossary.

If the volume is an edition of letters, collected works, readings or documents, further information ought to be provided — a biographical note on the editor and another on the person whose letters or writings are being reproduced, whether the contents are annotated or not, the dates covered by the letters or documents, whether the contents are all in the original language or have been translated in full or in part, and so on. Similar details must be given about bibliographies (selected, annotated, subjects and/or years covered), chronologies (period covered, depth of detail), atlases

(size and quality of maps, colour, clarity, scale, coverage) and other works of reference.

In case of translations, the original work which has been translated is as important as the translation, and the fullest information on it should be provided — the title, publisher, place of publication, date, edition, language, number of pages. If the translation is incomplete, this fact and if possible the size of the omission should be mentioned. Details of the career of the original writer must appear along with a note on the translator. We should also be told whether the book has been translated earlier, and if so in which language and when and by whom.

The publishers need not be scared by these demands and requirements. All the points made above will be found in the book itself, and the more general details and the background in the author's or editor's or translator's preface and introduction. The person who prepares the notice on the book for the journal does not have to, and must not, add anything from himself, otherwise the whole issue of reviewing will crop up. His task is to describe the book as completely and faithfully as is possible staying within the information contained in the book itself — to give facts, not opinions.

If such a journal appears four times a year — and I repeat, covering all regions, all languages, all subjects, and all kinds of publications, including pamphlets, manifestos and speeches — the general reader and the scholar will have what he badly needs.

Besides satisfying the reading public, such a publication will be of much commercial use to the book trade. It will enable the local bookshops to place orders and the librarians to make their selections. It will also keep the foreign booksellers informed of what has been published in Pakistan. And it will also help to increase the sales. As the journal will be priced, it might meet its cost of production and thus place no extra financial burden on the publishing industry.

CHAPTER 6
THE DAYS OF GOD

"We are what you were; we will be what you are" ran the refrain of Sparta's national hymn. Past and present intertwine on the loom of time. The past is indispensable, the present essential, the future unavoidable. The past is the flight of years we have flown. The future is the sight of days unscaled. We stand in the middle of the present and look back with nostalgia, pride, regret, anger or pain (depending on what and how we see). The past is our achievement, the present our trial, the future our opportunity.

The historian is primarily concerned with the past. He can't undo it, or forget it, or ignore it. The Pakistani historian has achieved the impossible. He has ignored his past by turning his back upon it. He has forgotten it in his infatuation with the passing show of today. He has undone it by distorting it. Either he does not write, and thus commits the crime of silence. Or he writes, but often pours a fatal poison in the veins of the society. In both cases his name is not mud, it is quagmire. Will he never change? Will he never share our sense of shame? Will hope never come that comes to all?

In all humility but with stubborn insistence I will beg the Pakistani historian to do two things: constantly to bear in his thoughts the three short words of the Quran, *al-dhikr ayyam-Allah* (commemorate and bring to mind the days of God), and often to recite to himself the following verses from Iqbal's *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* (my translation):

فرد چوں پیوند ایامش گسیخت　　شانہ ادراک او دندانہ ریخت

Once the individual loosens his bonds with his past
The comb of his percipience drops its teeth.

قوم روشن از سواد سرگذشت　　خود شناس آمد زیاد سرگذشت

A nation is illumed by the writing and learning of its history;
It descries itself by bringing its past to mind.

سرگذشت او گر از یادش رود　　باز اندر نیستی گم می شود

If it lets its history be erased from its memory,
It loses itself once again in the well of oblivion.

نسخه بود ترا اے ہوشمند　　ربط ایام آمدہ شیرازہ بند

O wise one, the annals of thy days of yore
Serve to stitch together the leaves of thy whilom years.

ربط ایام است مارا پیرہن　　سوزنش حفظ روایات کہن

The continuity of the days gone by is like a vesture to us,
Whose needle stands guard on our hallowed traditions.

چیست تاریخ اے ز خود بیگانہ　　داستانے قصہ افسانہ

O thou, who art a stranger to thine own self, how rateth thou history?
A tale, a yarn, a story, a saga?

این ترا از خویشتن آگہ کند　　آشنائے کار و مرد رہ کند

It makes thee aware of thyself;
It makes thee know thy duty; it makes thee the master of the way.

روح را سرمایہ تاب است این　　جسم ملت راچو اعصاب است این

History is the fount from which our soul takes its glow;
History supplies the nervous system of the nation's physical frame.

ہمچو خنجر برفسانت می زند   باز بر روے جہانت می زند

History sharpens thee on its whetstone like a poniard,
And then hurls thee upon the face of the earth.

وہ چہ ساز جاں نگار و دلپذیر   نغمہ ہائے رفتہ در تارش اسیر

O thee, hearken to the harp of history that moves the soul and warms the heart,
That holds within its tremulous strings all the melodies of yester-years.

شعلہ افسردہ در سوزش نگر   دوش در آغوش امروزش نگر

Seeest thee not the dying flame at rest in history's blaze!
Findeth thee not in the clasp of today all thy yesterdays!

شمع او بخت امم را کوکب است   روشن ازوے امشب وہم دیشب است

The candle of history is the lodestar for the voyager of the seas of time;
Its radiance shines upon this night as brightly as upon the nights that have passed away.

چشم پرکارے کہ بیند رفتہ را   پیش تو باز آفریند رفتہ را

The cunning eye that is capable of espying antiquity
Can re-create the past in the present, for thee to behold.

باده صد ساله در مینائے او   مستی پارینه در صہبائے او

The goblet of history holds in it the wine mellowed by a hundred years,
In which thou wilt view the ferment of the days departed.

صید گیرے کو بدام اندر کشید   طائرے کز بوستان ما پرید

History is the fowler who draws into his snare
Every warbler that had winged away from our garden.

ضبط کن تاریخ را پاینده شو   از نفسہائے رمید زنده شو

Chronicle thy history and live evermore;
Come alive from the moments sped and gone.

دوش را پیوند با امروز کن   زندگی را مرغ دست آموز کن

Make fast thy yesterdays with the today that is thine;
And thou shalt make thy life a bird tamed to thy hand.

رشتہ ایام را آور بدست   ورنہ گردی روز کورو شب پرست

If thou canst not hold fast to the thread of history
Thou shalt be blind by day and a slave by night.

سر زند از ماضی تو حال تو   خیز داز حال تو استقبال تو

From thy past emerges thy present;
Out of thy present issues forth thy future.

مگسل ار خواہی حیات لا زوال　　رشتہ ماضی استقبال و حال

If thou desirest a life without the sear and the yellow leaf, sunder not
Thy past from thy future or thy present.

If thou desirest a life without the scar and the yellow
leaf, sunder not
Thy past from thy future or thy present.

INDEX

THE PAKISTANI HISTORIAN

In Pakistan, with a population of 120 million, we have only five or six historians of any repute. And, like governments, people get the historians they deserve. This book tries to seek some explanations of this massive failure.

Is historical source material available in our libraries, archives and museums? Why don't people preserve papers of historical importance? Who don't leaders write their memoirs? Why does the All India Muslim League still lack a chronicler, Jinnah his biographer, and all major movements and parties their historians? Why is the historian discouraged from objectively prying into the past? Why are Pakistanis indifferent to their history? How are our history teachers trained, appointed, promoted and how is history taught?

The historian ought to have a command of several languages if he is to base his inquiry on original sources. Is the Pakistani historian equipped for this? How are historians treated by publishers and reviewers?

In this book the greatest living historian of the country answers these questions with his usual perception, grasp and verve. What he says should interest all those who make, write, interpret, read and teach history.

Professor KHURSHEED KAMAL AZIZ was educated at the M.B. High School, Batala, Forman Christian College and the Government College, Lahore, and the Victoria University of Manchester. He has been on the academic staff of the Government College, Lahore, and of the Universities of the Punjab, London, Cambridge, Khartoum and Heidelberg, and has delivered occasional lectures at the Universities of Karachi, Peshawar, Dacca, Islamabad, Hull, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Geneva, Oxford and Bergen. During intervals snatched from teaching abroad he has served at home as Deputy Official Historian to the Government of Pakistan, Chairman of the National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research, and Special Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister. Author of over a dozen books, he is a historian of rank with an international reputation.

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